



MQF/EQF Introductory Level A

LEA-01-21G

Award in Vocational Skills

Course Specification

Course Description

The Award in Vocational and Employability Skills (Introductory Level A) is a structured programme of study that helps students with learning disabilities / learning difficulties acquire skills necessary to gain and maintain employment or to further their education. Students will be trained in Hospitality and Retail, and Office Skills. They are also assessed in Key skills which include Maltese, English, Mathematics, IT, PSHE, Daily Living and Community Skills and Customer Care and Employability skills. A work placement experience within the college is also provided. Before enrolling in the programme, students are required to attend a three-day evaluation period to assess their suitability for the course.

Programme Learning Outcomes

At the end of the programme the learner will be able to:

1. *Have a basic knowledge of a vocational area from (i) Hospitality and Retail and (ii) Office and Digital Skills;*
2. *Become familiar with employment and related basic responsibilities;*
3. *Be prepared for independent living through development of key skills, life skills and employability;*
4. *Function in society and familiarise themselves with the place of work.*

Entry Requirements

Finished Compulsory Education.

Provision of documents including School Leaving Certificate.

A recent psychological report (issued no more than 3 years before the date of application) and school reports including the last Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Adapt to both class-based and community-based learning - to be ascertained through an induction session at MCAST, attendance for which is compulsory.

Other entry requirements

Applicants may be asked to sit for an Interview.

Key Information

Awarding Body - MCAST

Accreditation Status - Accredited via MCAST's Self Accreditation Process (MCAST holds Self-Accrediting Status as per 1st schedule of Legal Notice 296/2012)

Type of Programme: Qualification

MQF Level	Examples of Qualifications	'Qualification' Minimum Credits Required	'Award' Credits Required
Level 8	Doctoral Degree Third Cycle Bologna Process	NA	NA
Level 7	Masters Second Cycle Bologna Process	90-120	Less than 30
	Post-Graduate Diploma	60	
	Post-Graduate Certificate	30	
Level 6	Bachelor ²³ /Bachelor (Hons.) ²⁴ First Cycle Bologna Process	180-240	Less than 180
Level 5	Short Cycle Qualification	120	Less than 60
	Undergraduate Higher Diploma	90	
	Undergraduate Diploma	60	
	Undergraduate Certificate	30	
	VET Level 5 Programme ²⁵	60-120	
Level 4	Pre-Tertiary Certificate	30	Less than 120
	VET Level 4 Programme ²⁶	120	
	MATSEC Certificate	NA	
Level 3	VET Level 3 Programme ²⁷	60	Less than 60
	General and Subject Certificate	NA	
Level 2	VET Level 2 Programme ²⁸	60	Less than 60
	General and Subject Certificate	NA	
Level 1	VET Level 1 Programme ²⁹	40	Less than 40
	General and Subject Certificate	NA	
Introductory Level A	Preparatory Programme	30	Less than 30
Introductory Level B	Pre-entry Basic Skills Course	30	Less than 30

Table 1: Minimum number of credits for 'Qualifications' and parameters for 'Awards'

Fig.1: p56, Ministry for Education and Employment & National Commission for Further and Higher Education Malta (2016). *Referencing Report, 4th Edition*. NCFHE.

Total number of Hours: 750

Mode of attendance: Full-time

Duration: 1 Year

Target audience for MCAST full-time courses is 16 to 65+

The official language of instruction at MCAST is English. All notes and textbooks are in English (except for language courses which will be in the respective language being instructed). International candidates will be requested to meet English language certification requirements for access to the course.

This course will be offered at

MCAST has four campuses as follows:

MCAST Main Campus

Triq Kordin, Paola, Malta

All courses except for the Institute for the Creative Arts, Centre of Agriculture, Aquatics and Animal Sciences are offered here.

Institute for the Creative Arts

Mosta Campus

Misraħ Ghonoq Targa Gap,

Mosta

**Institute of Applied Sciences,
Centre of Agriculture, Aquatics and Animal Sciences,
Luqa Road, Qormi**

Gozo Campus

J.F. De Chambray Street

MCAST, Għajnsielem

Gozo

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

The programmes offered are vocational in nature and entail both theoretical lectures delivered in classes as well as practical elements that are delivered in laboratories, workshops, salons, simulators as the module requirements dictate.

Each module or unit entails a number of in person and/or online contact learning hours that are delivered by the lecturer or tutor directly (See also section 'Total Learning Hours').

Access to all resources is provided to all registered students. These include study resources in paper or electronic format through the Library and Resource Centre as well as tools, software, equipment and machinery that are provided by the respective institutes depending on the requirements of the course or module.

Students may however be required to provide consumable material for use during practical sessions and projects unless these are explicitly provided by the College.

All Units of study are assessed throughout the academic year through continuous assessment using a variety of assessment tools. Coursework tasks are exclusively based on the Learning Outcomes and Grading Criteria as prescribed in the course specification. The Learning Outcomes and Grading Criteria are communicated to the Student via the coursework documentation.

The method of assessment shall reflect the Level, credit points (ECTS) and the schedule of time-tabled/non-timetabled hours of learning of each study unit. A variety of assessment instruments, not solely Time Constrained Assignments/Exams, are used to gather and interpret evidence of Student competence toward pre-established grading criteria that are aligned to the learning outcomes of each unit of the programme of study.

Grading criteria are assessed through a number of tasks, each task being assigned a number of marks. The number of grading criteria is included in the respective Programme Specification.

The distribution of marks and assessment mode depends on the nature and objectives of the unit in question.

Coursework shall normally be completed during the semester in which the Unit is delivered.

Time-constrained assignments may be held between 8 am and 8 pm during the delivery period of a Unit, or at the end of the semester in which the Unit is completed. The dates are notified and published on the Institute notice boards or through other means of communication.

Certain circumstances (such as but not limited to the Covid 19 pandemic) may lead Institutes and Centres to hold teaching and assessment remotely (online) as per MCAST QA Policy and Standard for Online Teaching, Learning and Assessment (Doc 020) available via link <https://www.mcast.edu.mt/college-documents/>

The Programme Regulations referenced below apply. (DOC 003 available at: link <https://www.mcast.edu.mt/college-documents/>)

Total Learning Hours

The total learning hours required for each unit or module are determined as follows:

Credits (ECTS)	Indicative contact hours	Total Student workload (hrs)	Self-Learning and Assessment Hours
1	5 - 10 hrs	25 hrs	20-15 hrs*
2	10 - 20 hrs	50 hrs	40-30 hrs*
3	15 - 30 hrs	75 hrs	60-45 hrs*
4	20 - 40 hrs	100 hrs	80-60 hrs*
6	30 - 60 hrs	150 Hrs	120-90 hrs*
9	45 - 90 hrs	225 hrs	180-135 hrs*
12	60 - 120 hrs	300 hrs	240-180 hrs*

* The 'Self-Learning and Assessment Hours' amount to the difference between the contact hours and total student workload.

Grading system

All MCAST programmes adopt a learner centred approach through the focus on Learning Outcomes. The assessment of MCAST programmes is criterion-referenced and thus assessors are required to assess learners' evidence against a pre-determined set of Learning Outcomes and assessment criteria.

For a student to be deemed to have successfully passed a unit, a minimum of 50% (grade D) must be achieved. In case of part time programmes, the student must achieve a minimum of 45% to successfully pass the unit.

All units are individually graded as follows:

A* (90-100)

A (80-89)

B (70-79)

C (60-69)

D (50-59)

Unsatisfactory work is graded as 'U'.

Work-based learning units are graded on a Pass/Fail basis only.

Detailed information regarding the grading system may be found in the following document: DOC 003 available at: link <https://www.mcast.edu.mt/college-documents/>

Intake Dates

- MCAST opens calls for application once a year between July and August of each year for prospective applicants residing in MALTA.
- Applications to full-time courses from international students not residing in MALTA are accepted between April and Mid-August.
- For exact dates re calls for applications please follow this link <https://www.mcast.edu.mt/online-applications-2/>

Course Fees

MCAST courses are free for Maltese and EU candidates. International candidates coming from outside the EU need to pay fees for the respective course. Course fees are set on a per-level and course duration basis. For access to course fee structure and payment methods please visit <https://www.mcast.edu.mt/fee-payments-for-non-eu-candidates/>.

Method of Application

Applications to full-time courses are received online via the College Management Information System. Candidates can log in using Maltese Electronic ID (eID) or European eIDAS (electronic identification and trust services) to access the system directly and create an account as the identity is verified electronically via these secure services.

Non-EU candidates need to request account creation through an online form by providing proof of identification and basic data. Once the identity is verified and the account is created the candidate may proceed with the online application according to the same instructions applicable to all other candidates.

Non-EU candidates require a study visa in order to travel to Malta and join the course applied for. For further information re study-visa please access <https://www.identitymalta.com/unit/central-visa-unit/>.

For access to instructions on how to apply online please visit <https://www.mcast.edu.mt/online-applications-2/>

Contact details for requesting further information about future learning opportunities:

MCAST Career Guidance

Tel: 2398 7135/6

Email: career.guidance@mcast.edu.mt

Current Approved Programme Structure

Unit Code	Unit Title	ECTS	Semester
CDPKS-A03-2101	Mathematics	3	Year
CDPKS-A03-2102	English	3	Year
CDPKS-A03-2103	Malti	3	Year
CDPKS-A03-2104	I.T.	3	Year
CDPKS-A03-2105	Daily Living and Community Skills	3	Year
CDPKS-A03-2106	Personal, Social and Health Education	3	Year
CDPWV-A03-2101	Customer Care and Employability Skills	3	Year
CDPWR-A03-2101	Retail	3	Year
CDPWH-A03-2101	Hospitality	3	Year
CDPWO-A03-2101	Office	3	Year
Total ECTS		30	/

CDPKS-A03-2101 Mathematics

Unit level (MQF/EQF): Introductory Level A

Credits: 3

Delivery Mode: Face to Face

Total Learning Hours: 75

Unit Description

The unit begins with a basic introduction to the identification, use and simple manipulation of numbers. Through the unit the learners will apply basic mathematical concepts. The initial topics will work as a scaffolding to the application of the use of numbers in everyday life situations.

The learners will move on to learning about the basic principles when using mathematical data and so learn to identify data from simple tables, charts, lists and pictures. In addition to this, learners will also become familiar with good time management and money handling.

As a final step towards completing this unit, learners will learn the different shapes and their forms in preparation for application of shapes to every day familiar contexts.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit, the learner will be able to

- 1. Identify a range of numbers in their different forms.*
- 2. Interpret and handle simple data using numbers and pictures.*
- 3. Demonstrate the meaning and use of money in various situations.*
- 4. Use analogue and digital time in every day contexts and situations.*

CDPKS-A03-2102 English

Unit level (MQF/EQF): Introductory Level A

Credits: 3

Delivery Mode: Face to Face

Total Learning Hours: 75

Unit Description

In this unit learners will be equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding to use and apply English in everyday life. Gaining these skills will ensure that the learners will be able to get the most out of their future work and education.

This unit covers basic skills required such as reading, writing, listening and speaking with the varying degrees of support. The topics and texts presented will enable learners to foster the language learning process and focus on themes of functional English pertaining to everyday life and the workplace.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit, the learner will be able to

1. *Recognise given letters and symbols correctly with varying degrees of support.*
2. *Identify the purpose of a short text on a familiar topic with varying degrees of support.*
3. *Produce a simple text and a completed form.*
4. *Collect information from simple verbal communication.*
5. *Participate in simple exchanges about familiar topics with another person in a familiar situation.*

CDPKS-A03-2103 Malti

Unit level (MQF/EQF): Introductory Level A

Credits: 3

Delivery Mode: Face to Face

Total Learning Hours: 75

Id-Deskrizzjoni tal-Unità

F'din l-unità introduttorja ta' livell A, il-Malti jintgħallem biex l-istudenti jkunu kapaċi jesprimu ħsibijiethom u xewqathom bil-fomm u bil-kitba filwaqt li jkunu kapaċi jaqraw kliem sempliċi marbut mal-ħajja ta' kuljum u l-aspett vokazzjonali.

Din l-unità ser tgħin ukoll lill-istudenti biex jikkomunikaw u jirrelataw man-nies ta' madwarhom fil-ħajja ta' kuljum u fuq il-post tax-xogħol bl-għajjnuna meħtieġa.

Il-Kisbiet mit-Tagħlim

- 1. Ifhem punti qosra dwar diskors relatat mal-ħajja ta' kuljum bl-għajjnuna mogħtija.*
- 2. Ikkomunika ma' persuni oħra b'Malti bażiku u korrett, bl-għajjnuna mogħtija.*
- 3. Ifhem istruzzjonijiet qosra u sempliċi dwar ħwejjeġ ta' kuljum bl-għajjnuna mogħtija.*
- 4. Ikteb sentenzi sempliċi b'Malti korrett, skont ir-regoli tal-ortografija u s-sintassi, bl-għajjnuna mogħtija.*

CDPKS-A03-2104 I.T.

Unit level (MQF/EQF): Introductory Level A

Credits: 3

Delivery Mode: Face to Face

Total Learning Hours: 75

Unit Description

Using IT has become an integral part of the vocational sector and is integrated in many work processes.

Moreover, everyday communication and learning processes use IT very frequently. In order to ensure that students can participate in everyday life and be active participants in the job market, this unit deals with handling very basic IT requirements and skills.

In this unit, students will learn how to access a device and use basic controls, distinguish between hardware and software and their use in IT, online safety, procedures in working with files and folders, the main search tools for searching information on the internet, how to present personal information and how to send and receive information using emails..

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit, the learner will be able to

- 1. Demonstrate how to access a device and use basic controls.*
- 2. Distinguish between software and hardware.*
- 3. Identify how to work safely and responsibly online.*
- 4. Identify basic file management procedures.*
- 5. Demonstrate how to search for and use internet-based information.*
- 6. Explore basic functions of word processing, spreadsheet and presentation software.*
- 7. Use a digital device to communicate and exchange information.*

CDPKS-A03-2105 Daily Living and Community Skills

Unit level (MQF/EQF): Introductory Level A

Credits: 3

Delivery Mode: Face to Face

Total Learning Hours: 75

Unit Description

This unit is designed to develop some of the basic skills needed to look after oneself and one's home, as well as some of the knowledge and skills needed to operate within a community.

The individual needs of learners are numerous and diverse. In order to address this, this unit is designed to cover a range of areas and is divided into 4 topics:

- Basic Health & Hygiene (e.g. basic personal hygiene and health care)
- Basic Skills in the Home (e.g. basic laundry, food preparation, housecleaning)
- Basic Skills in the Community (e.g. basic money handling, road safety and transportation)

Basic Civic Engagement and Leisure Activities (e.g. conscientious community action, hobbies, group activities, using media for entertainment and information)

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit, the learner will be able to

- 1. Recognize the need for personal hygiene and what to do in the case of illness or injury.*
- 2. Practice basic home management skills.*
- 3. Identify community facilities and services as well as safe participation and travel.*
- 4. Explore ways to increase civic engagement and leisure development.*

CDPKS-A03-2106 Personal, Social and Health Education

Unit level (MQF/EQF): Introductory Level A

Credits: 3

Delivery Mode: Face to Face

Total Learning Hours: 75

Unit Description

Research shows that PSHE education helps learners to develop skills and aptitudes - like teamwork, communication, and resilience which are crucial to navigating the challenges and opportunities of the modern world, and are increasingly valued by employers.

Apart from a vocational training focus, this programme also offers a framework for the development and refinement of life skills. An in-depth involvement in the topic Personal, Social and Health Educational is a fundamental prerequisite for an independent, self-fulfilling life and is considered an important condition for the successful integration of the personal life with the world of work.

Personal and social development provides skills which will enable learners to participate fully in the worlds that surrounds them. Once learners acquired various self-independent skills in the class setting they can demonstrate them in a real life situation. Therefore, the unit involves a wide repertoire of active learning and experiential strategies which will put the learner's experiences and active participation at the core of this learning exchange.

The topics covered at this level are; Communication Skills, Healthy Living Skills and aspects of Character and Attitude Skills.

In the Communication skills topics, learners will be exposed to alternative ways of communication through various presentations and real life activities and simulations. Learners will also understand that the various barriers to communication and how these can be by passed through communication aids and devices. This will support the learner to communicate more effectively which will further support their independence.

In the Healthy Living Skills Topic, learners will be exposed to various health related aspects. Lectures in this topic will include presentations and real life activities and simulation related to healthy eating, being active and also how to approach healthcare professionals when needed. This unit also focused on the integration of body and mind for a healthy life.

During the topic of Character and Attitude, learners will be invited to explore different aspects of their own character and how this aspects can influence the people around them. Learners will also have the opportunity to look at their own strengths, weaknesses and areas of improvement with various degrees of support which will further them support them into fitting into the world of work.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit, the learner will be able to

- 1. Use simulated tasks and real life experiences to work on personal self development with varying degrees of support.*
- 2. Apply basic techniques in communication in a familiar rehearsed situation with varying degrees of support.*
- 3. Apply healthy practices in own daily life, with varying degrees of support.*
- 4. Recognise own strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement with varying degrees of support.*

CDPWV-A03-2101 Customer Care and Employability Skills

Unit level (MQF/EQF): Introductory Level A

Credits: 3

Delivery Mode: Face to Face

Total Learning Hours: 75

Unit Description

The Employability Skills section of this unit aims at introducing students to skills needed at the workplace and focuses on three main areas:

- skills for gaining employment such as exploring occupations, searching for a job, documents needed when applying for job, and preparing for an interview
- developing transferable skills such as teamwork, communication, problem-solving, and time-management
- developing skills in practice by participating in a supervised work placement

In the Customer Care section, learners will be introduced to basic customer care skills needed in the place of work. Learners will understand the importance of customer care skills when dealing with colleagues, superiors, clients and guests. Focus will be on:

- general customer rules, etiquette such as boundaries, attitude, punctuality and appropriate behaviour
- verbal and nonverbal communication skills at the place of work
- salutations and correct procedures when answering the telephone

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit, the learner will be able to

1. *Demonstrate the basic rules of customer care at the place of work.*
2. *Outline good communication skills needed at the place of work.*
3. *Identify the steps that need to be taken to find and apply for a job.*
4. *Identify basic employability skills.*
5. *Explore various processes and procedures at the workplace.*

CDPWR-A03-2101 Retail

Unit level (MQF/EQF): Introductory Level A

Credits: 3

Delivery Mode: Face to Face

Total Learning Hours: 75

Unit Description

Positive support measures and training in vocational skills to end underemployment of individuals with additional needs are key elements to unlock job potential.

This Unit will expose the learners to a general overview of what it is required to work in a retail environment in a world where consumerism is striving. Learners following this unit will look at the various retail channels, its department and various occupational roles and skills required to work within the different spheres of retail. The learners will also be encouraged to become familiar with the appropriate ways of positively presenting and dealing with superiors, colleagues and costumers. This will lead learners to be more familiar with the general retail terminology and skills which will further support them in their assistance of producing and selling of own products with their respective team and be able to communicate with costumers to provide basic information when needed.

This unit will also provide various hands on opportunities for the learners to experience on a first hand basis the five basic retail processes in various retail simulations and or real life retail activities organized by the college. Thus, learners will be exposed to practical ways of how to produce own products, budget for materials, package, store, present and sell them to various costumers, with varying degrees of support. In addition to this, learners will understand better the need to work in teams when working on such retail projects, as well as the importance of planning ahead and working within a deadline.

All the above, if achieved successfully, will enable the learners to continue with their studies in improving their vocational skills throughout the second part of the unit ***Retail*** in the following year.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit, the learner will be able to

1. *Identify the basic retail organisational structure, titles and responsibilities of various retail workers, various retail channels, and product properties within the retail sector.*
2. *Demonstrate the benefits of leaving a good impression at the place of work with various retail stakeholders, with varying degrees of support.*
3. *Assist in the process of researching, designing, creating, finishing and packing own artisan products from various raw materials, with the potential of participating in a various retail processes.*

CDPWH-A03-2101 Hospitality

Unit level (MQF/EQF): Introductory Level A

Credits: 3

Delivery Mode: Face to Face

Total Learning Hours: 75

Unit Description

In this unit the learners will be exposed to the Tourism industry. By learning about the Touristic attractions, they will also be better able to identify what work opportunities there are for them.

In this unit learners will be better able to familiarize themselves with the various structures present in the Tourism industry in Malta. Learners will better identify what would be required of them in the various role capacities pertaining to jobs found within the Tourism and Hospitality Industry, and learn about the different forms of business that require their services.

Learners who attend the program will be prepared for vocational formation that is updated and current, with a focus on ethical and responsible performance that would make them job ready.

The skills learned through this first year of the program will introduce them to the wide array of skills required to work in the different department found in the Hospitality and Tourism industry.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit, the learner will be able to

- 1. Recognize the different Tourism Hotspots found in the Archipelago of Malta.*
- 2. Identify the food and nutrition required to prepare healthy meals.*
- 3. Demonstrate the proper use of equipment required of a waiter.*
- 4. Apply health and safety features found in the Food and Beverage Division of a Hotel i.e. kitchen and, restaurant.*
- 5. Perform tasks found in the Rooms Division.*

CDPWO-A03-2101 Office

Unit level (MQF/EQF): Introductory Level A

Credits: 3

Delivery Mode: Face to Face

Total Learning Hours: 75

Unit Description

The aim of this unit is mainly to prepare learners to perform basic office duties in an office.

Learners will have the opportunity to get in touch with a range of hands-on tasks and duties that they will encounter as an office assistant. These tasks will include sorting, filing systems, folding papers, preparing mail, stapling, punching and other basic duties. Learners will also use different office equipment with guidance. Health and safety will be applied when using such equipment.

Different office roles within an office environment will be introduced within this unit. Importance will be given on the basic skills needed when working in an office. Learners will learn about punctuality and office attire.

The use of clear instructions, repetition, audio-visuals, digital resources, pictures and other various print can enhance learning. Brainstorming, role - plays, informal discussions, short specific hands-on repetitive tasks are some of the activities that can be used with varying degrees of support.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit, the learner will be able to

- 1. Define the meaning of office environment and the related basic equipment.*
- 2. Demonstrate the role of an office assistant.*
- 3. Handle basic office equipment/supplies safely and with support.*
- 4. Carry out simple office tasks safely and with support.*