

Focus on the Environmental Studies Sec Exam

From Form III to V all students have three general lessons related to **Geography, History and Social Studies**. These lessons are important for they give essential knowledge regarding our country, region and world. Students learn important skills as photo interpretation and map reading. Such know-how is important for each student whether studying languages, sciences or arts for they help them create links between the various specialities. In today's complicated world these subjects contribute to fostering the character of students so that they gain an insight about the role of each individual as global citizens.

Furthermore through these subjects the syllabus for the Sec Exam is being covered. It is up to each student to decide whether to sit for this exam or not. At school the teachers involved in teaching these subjects give their students the full back up for this exam. The **revised syllabus** of Environmental Studies is divided under six main topics. The full syllabus for 2013 and 2014 can be downloaded in either Maltese or English from the following website www.home.um.edu.mt/matsec

The main topics are:

- The world - our home
- Management of resources
- Human population
- Human communities
- Work and leisure
- Managing a nation
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The exam is divided into Paper I and Paper II. Students have to choose whether to sit for Paper IIA or IIB. The exam papers are issued in both Maltese and English. Candidates may answer any question in Maltese and/or English. However no change of language is permitted within the sub sections of the same question.

15% of the global mark that is 30 marks is allotted to the investigation project that each student has to prepare. At our school we encourage our students to choose a tutor, from one of their three teachers, who will correct the drafts of the various chapters so that the project presented, will be of good standard. The idea behind this project is to encourage students to collect their own data through direct observation, questionnaires, and surveys. It is very important for the students to then analyse the information collected. The students sitting for this exam in May 2013 or 2014 have to choose from one of the following topics:

English Version

- a) The **human** impact on a stretch of coastline in the Maltese Islands
- b) The use of Solar Energy by **Maltese Households**
- c) An architectural legacy from the times of the Order of the **Knights of St John** in Malta
- d) The Maltese way of life about **two hundred years ago**
- e) An **EU**-funded project in Malta
- f) Lifestyle of **Maltese youth** in the past and present

Maltese Version

- a) L-impatt tal-bniedem fuq parti tal-kosta ta' Malta
- b) L-użu tal-enerġija solari fid-djar Maltin
- c) Il-wirt arkitettoniku f'Malta miż-żmien tal-Ordni tal-Kavallieri ta' San Ġwann
- d) L-istil tal-ħajja f'Malta madwar mitejn sena ilu
- e) Proġett iffinanzjat bil-fondi tal-Unjoni Ewropea f'Malta
- f) L-istil ta' ħajja taż-żagħżagħ Maltin fil-passat u fil-preżent

It is important that the project presented is the work of the student himself. Any student who hands in a project which is copied will be reported to the relevant authorities. Students might be asked by the Sec Board to sit for an interview in regards to their investigation.

The students can work on their investigation during the summer of 2012 or 2013. In order to assist our students we have prepared a set of tips for the given topics. Once the students choose their topic they can download a copy of the tips so that the students can work on their own during the summer holidays. The students can present their draft copy to their tutor during October/November. Eventually the Form V students have to hand in their two copies of their investigative report at school to their tutor after the Christmas holidays. The school copy can be given on CD. In this way the students will then be able to focus on their annual exams. Students can collect back their original copy in June.

The general layout of the project should include the following:

Front cover	Title of project, name of student and class
1 st page	Home address, school address, and scholastic year
Introduction	Why was the theme chosen? What do you plan to investigate? How do you plan to carry out this investigation?
Contents	The page reference for each chapter
Index of illustrations	The page reference for photographs, maps, graphs, and photocopies of newspaper articles etc.
Chapters	The chapters, at least five, should reflect the aims mentioned in the introduction. Graphs, surveys and questionnaires should be fully analysed A caption should be included under each photograph, map or sketch.
Conclusion	A summary is given of all the aspects that the investigation has brought to light. Suggestions for the future should include above all what the student himself can do in favour of the area under study

Bibliography	List of books, websites, pamphlets, magazines, newspapers that have been used as reference.
Acknowledgements	In this section all the persons that have helped the student can be officially thanked.

Eligible students who are still in Form IV can sit for this exam as private candidates. They have to hand in their reports to the Sec Examinations Board as directed by the Sec Support Unit through the letter sent to all candidates. These students are also encouraged to contact any one of their teachers teaching Geography, History or Social Studies if they have difficulties in regards to this exam or their investigative project.

The team involved in the teaching of Environmental Studies include the teachers of Geography, History and Social Studies. Thanks to the collaboration between these teachers quite a number of students have been well prepared for this exam since it was officially started by the Sec Examinations Board. Over the years those students who used the services offered by their teachers managed to present very good reports. Unfortunately each year there are always a number of students who leave everything up to the very last minute and present poor and shoddy work. **The support of the parents is therefore very important.** By knowing what this exam entails parents can now discuss with their sons so that students who sit for this exam only do so if they are ready to commit themselves to the work involved.

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