

SEC SYLLABUS (2024)

SOCIAL STUDIES

SEC 27

SYLLABUS

**Social Studies SEC 27
Syllabus**(Not available in September)
Paper I: (2 hrs) + Paper II: (2 hrs)**Introduction**

Social Studies is the integrated study of the social sciences and the humanities to promote civic competence. The subject provides coordinated and systematic study that draws upon various disciplines as anthropology, economics, geography, history, law, political science, and philosophy. The primary purpose of social studies in schools is to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a democratic society.

The syllabus has been designed to enable all candidates to gain grades according to their competence and to differentiate among them on the basis of positive achievement.

Questions will be set in both Maltese and English and answers may be given in either language.

Aims

The aims of the syllabus as a course of study are to enable candidates to:

- (a) introduce, understand, and apply basic Social Studies concepts;
- (b) develop an appreciation of social issues relating appropriately to the conditions of modern society;
- (c) cultivate a critical awareness of recent developments in the local, European, and international contexts; and
- (d) enable candidates to apply the subject areas to their life experience;

Objectives

The examination will assess candidates' abilities in relation to three areas:

1. *Knowledge and understanding*

Candidates are expected to:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of contemporary social issues with particular reference to Maltese society within a Euro-Mediterranean and global perspective;
- show comprehension of how societies arise from the interaction between social institutions and human behaviour; and
- show understanding of social studies concepts, ideas, and principles as outlined in the syllabus, and their application in everyday life;

2. *Skills*

Candidates are expected to:

- apply their knowledge to real life situations;
- interpret data, both textual and graphical; and
- present a logical argument with the use of appropriate terminology.

3. *Values and attitudes*

Candidates are expected to:

- demonstrate awareness of issues relating to gender inequality, and political, religious, and racial discrimination;
- demonstrate how diverse opinions and values affect everyday life in a multicultural society; and
- show respect and solidarity towards the full spectrum of society;

Examination Set-up

The examination will consist of two papers of two hours' duration each. The papers will be set in both Maltese and English. Candidates must choose to answer either entirely in Maltese or entirely in English.

Paper I (50% of the global mark): This paper must be taken by **ALL** candidates and will assess the candidates' knowledge of the whole syllabus content. Paper I will consist of two sections. Each section will consist of a selected text on which a set of five questions will be given. Candidates will be required to answer both sections of the paper.

Paper II (50% of the global mark): There will be two versions of this paper: Paper IIA and Paper IIB. In their answers candidates are expected to discuss topics from both a theoretical and practical perspective.

Both Paper IIA and Paper IIB will consist of 4 sections that correspond to the different sections of the syllabus. In each section there will be two questions and candidates will be expected to answer **one** question from each section. Each question carries equal marks.

Paper IIA is more difficult than Paper I and Paper IIB is easier than Paper I

Results

Candidates sitting for Paper I and Paper IIA may qualify for a grade within the range 1 to 5 (i.e. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5); the results of candidates who do not obtain a Grade 5 shall remain Unclassified (U). Candidates sitting for Paper I and Paper IIB may qualify for a grade not higher than 4 (i.e. grades 4, 5, 6, 7); the results of candidates who do not obtain at least a Grade 7 shall remain Unclassified (U).

Grade Descriptions

Grade 1

The student is able to:

- demonstrate a high level of sensitivity to the issues being discussed by showing an understanding of concepts and applying them in an experiential context;
- demonstrate that there are different interpretations of events, processes and developments;
- give reasons for facts, events and processes;
- organize and classify information through concepts; and
- engage in critical analysis.

Grade 5

- identify facts, events and processes;
- understand the meaning of basic concepts; and
- explain social events and social processes.

Grades 7

The student is able to

- recall basic information about social life;
- show ability to fulfil the requirements of the questions; and
- describe facts and processes

SUBJECT CONTENT

SECTION 1: THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY

The individual as a social being:

- The person as a unique individual and the understanding of 'self'.
- The person as a social being, as a member of a community and civil society.
- Social behaviour - interaction, relationships, independence versus interdependence.

Socialisation:

- Definition of socialisation.
- Types of socialisation: primary, secondary.
- Agents/units of socialisation - family, religion, schools, peer group, mass media, and workplaces.
- Socialisation in modern society: social class, gender, age, and ethnic groups.
- Deviance, crime and social control.

Groups:

- Definition of a group.
- Different types of groups and their roles (peer groups, interest groups, ethnic groups).
- Development of a group.
- Roles and conflicts within groups.
- Conformity and non-conformity.

Culture and identities:

- Definition of culture and its components.
- The main elements that make up a culture.
- Examples of cultural diversity (in the family, in the community and in the wider society).
- Sub-culture.
- National identity.
- Cultural change.
- Continuity versus change in culture - traditional and modern.

Social stratification and differentiation:

- Definition of social stratification and differentiation.
- Types of social stratification (caste, apartheid, feudal, social class).
- The social class structure (upper, middle, lower).
- Karl Marx and Max Weber on social stratification.
- Gender, ethnic, religious, and regional differences as sources of differentiation; conflicts that may arise from such differences.
- Social differentiation and life chances.
- Social mobility (vertical and horizontal).
- Factors leading to social mobility (occupation, education, social background, marriage).

SECTION 2: SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Family:

- Types of families (traditional, symmetrical, patriarchal, matriarchal).
- Roles, responsibilities and rights of family members.
- Functions of the family (social, educational, economic, sexual, reproductive, and psychological).
- Forms of families (nuclear, extended, modified extended, lone parent, gay and lesbian, step family, cohabitation).
- Types of marriage (monogamy, polygamy, polyandry, same-sex).
- The changing family and family-friendly measures.
- Family Law (1993) - (equality between partners, parental consensus, shared decision-making).
- The National Family Commission

Education:

- Education as a basic human right.
- Difference between education and learning.
- State and non-State education.
- Formal, non-formal and informal education.
- The National Minimum Curriculum and the hidden curriculum.
- Systems of formal education (preschool, primary, secondary, higher, adult, vocational).
- Inclusive education.
- Lifelong learning.
- Student mobility and opportunities to study abroad.

Religion:

- Definition of religion.
- Functions of religion.
- Main world religions: Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism.
- Types of religious organizations: churches, sects, new religious movements, denominations and cults.
- Secularisation and social change.
- Religious freedom and tolerance.

Politics:

- Defining key terms: politics, power, authority, government and the State.
- Citizenship: equality, freedom, and the rule of law.
- Civic rights and obligations.
- Centralisation and de-centralisation of government.
- Political ideologies (democracy, dictatorship, totalitarianism, monarchies).
- Characteristics of democracy - separation of powers, pluralism, freedom of religion, freedom of expression, association and movement, representation, transparency and accountability.
- Malta's system of government: parliamentary democracy - the role of the Parliament; the functions and role of the President of the Republic; the role of the Judiciary; the legislative, executive and judicial powers of the State; main characteristics of the Constitution; the Cabinet; the importance and role of the Opposition.
- The role of political parties in Malta.
- Historical milestones in Maltese political history since the Second World War: Independence (1964), the Republic (1974), Malta no longer a British base (1979), and Malta's membership in the European Union (2004).
- Local governments as an example of decentralization of power: the role and function of local councils in Malta; how they are elected; projects and initiatives taken by local councils.
- Malta's representation at supranational levels (the EU; Schengen Agreement, 2007; Member of the Euro Zone, 2008) and international levels (the Commonwealth; the United Nations).
- Malta's representation in the European Parliament.

Economy, work and leisure:

- Definition of economy, work and leisure.
- Work ethics.
- Division of labour and social implications of work (social status, financial independence, social interaction, a sense of identity, and contribution to the economy).
- The transformation of work: pre-industrial, industrial, and technological.
- Work and gender, disability, minority/ethnic groups, and age.
- Distribution of occupations according to skill, economic function, or social status.
- The employment structure (primary, secondary, tertiary, quaternary sectors).
- Economic systems (free market, centralised, and mixed economies).
- Malta's economy - a mixed economy based largely on the tertiary sector.
- Job mobility and career progression; the role of the Employment and Training Corporation in Malta.
- Unemployment (causes and effects) and poverty; underemployment.
- Industrial relations (social partners, trade unions, collective bargaining/agreements); industrial conflict; the role of the International Labour Organisation.
- The role of cooperatives and Small and Medium-sized enterprises.
- Voluntary work.
- Occupational health and safety.
- Changing leisure patterns.
- Different leisure patterns in Malta according to the type of work, working conditions, time, and income.

Health:

- Definition of health.
- A holistic concept of health as referred to in the WHO definition.
- The four determinants of health according to the WHO (the social and economic environment, the physical environment, lifestyle, and individual's characteristics and behaviours).
- Sustaining a healthy lifestyle (social activity, hygiene, stress management, health care, healthy diet, sports, and regular physical exercise).
- Social causes of illness (health as affected by social conditions, poverty, nutritional deficiencies, stress and lack of safety at work, overcrowded or poorly maintained housing, environmental pollution, and sanitation).
- The healthcare system and health services in Malta: State and private hospitals; polyclinics and private clinics; homes for the elderly (State, Church and private); community day centres; specialised hospitals in Malta.
- Local health organisations (e.g. Foundation for Health Services, SEDQA, APPOGG, CARITAS, MMDNA).
- International health organisations (WHO, Red Cross, and Doctors without Borders).

Mass media and communications:

- Definition of mass media and communication.
- Different forms and characteristics of mass media: newspapers, radio, fixed and mobile telephone, satellite and cable television; cinema, the internet and social networking; blogs; podcasts; electronic mail, electronic publications and e-shopping.
- Purposes of mass media (socialisation, social control, education, advocacy, entertainment, information to the public).
- The role of journalism in modern society (delivering information about social, political and economic issues).
- The role of the media in globalisation, and single ownership of mass media (media moguls e.g. Rupert Murdoch, Donald Trump).
- Pluralism of the media and its implications on society.
- Media influence and its effects (e.g. positive role models, media stereotyping and violence).

SECTION 3: SOCIAL ISSUES

Gender:

- Concept of gender; difference between sex and gender; changing gender roles in society.
- Gender equality and inequality; gender and poverty; gender discrimination (positive and negative).
- Gender and religion; the role of women with specific reference to Christianity and Islam.
- Feminism and the feminist movement.
- Family and child rearing; maternity and parental leave; childcare centres; women and domestic violence.
- Women and employment; education, career progression, and decision-making.
- Women's role in Maltese politics.
- Local and international organisations that provide social and/or economic support to women (State and Church organisations in Malta, National Council of Women, The Association of Women in Business, The Council for the Advancement of Women, International Labour Organisation; the United Nations Convention on equality between the sexes).

Youth in a changing society:

- Definition of youth; adolescence as age of transition from childhood to adulthood; physical and psychological development in youths; quest for identity.
- Role of youths in society: the dilemma faced by youth in maintaining social stability while acting as catalysts of social change.
- Youth and subcultures.
- Challenges faced by youths in a highly competitive society (in studying and employment)
- Social problems faced by youths (substance abuse, teenage pregnancies, attitudes to sexuality, sexually transmitted diseases, deviance and delinquency).
- Youth rehabilitation programmes.
- Youth opportunities: educational opportunities in Malta and abroad; EU educational programmes (*Comenius, Youth in Action Programme; Lifelong Learning Programme*); student exchange programmes.
- Youth and leisure: how youths enjoy their leisure time especially during weekends.
- The influence of mass media and consumerism on youths.
- Youth participation in local and national organisations (Student councils, youth movements, National Youth Council).

Welfare and social exclusion:

- Definition of welfare; welfare as a means of social protection.
- Welfare state and welfare society.
- Forms of welfare: monetary payments; vouchers; subsidies; health services and housing; welfare schemes funded by governments, the Church, and non-government organizations; public-private initiatives.
- Different forms of poverty: relative, absolute, material and social; effects of poverty on society.
- Indicators of poverty: levels of education, healthcare, employment, income, environment and housing; food provision; living at the risk of poverty.
- Forms of social exclusion: age, class, gender, race and belief systems, digital divide; links between social exclusion, crime, and poverty.

SECTION 4: DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGE

Forms of development:

- Definition of development;
- Types of development (economic, social, environmental, technological).
- Economic development: difference between standard of living and quality of life; characteristics of high-income, middle-income, and low-income countries; North-South divide in the world; Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Human Development Index (HDI).
- Social development: child, youth and adult development, community development, youth development.
- Environmental development (positive and negative aspects): land development (rural and urban), eco development.
- Technological development (advances in ICT and medical technology)

Sustainable development:

- Definition of sustainable development.
- The three Rs of sustainable development (reduce, reuse, recycle).
- Waste management: methods of disposal (integrated waste management, landfill, incineration); education and awareness.
- Pollution: forms of pollution (air, light, littering, noise, visual, radioactive, water, thermal, soil contamination, acid rain); sources and causes of pollution; effects of pollution on human health and the environment; environmental management (control of emissions and effluents into air, water or soil).
- Sustainable use of natural resources: depletion of limited natural resources (e.g. deforestation, excessive quarrying and mining, destruction of agricultural land).
- Global warming: causes of global warming; efforts to control global warming: greater use of public transport, renewable energy, smarter systems of heating and cooling, proper maintenance of vehicles;
- Malta's contribution to global warming control (Kyoto protocol, government subsidies for alternative energy); Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) – health, education, food, and clean water supply.

Population:

- Definition of demography; patterns of birth rates, death rates and natural population increase or decrease; the importance of population census.
- Population explosion in the 20th-21st century and its effects - on developed (e.g. ageing populations) and developing countries (young populations).
- Population mobility; temporary or permanent, work-related or residential); factors leading to population mobility (better transport, education, and technological developments).
- Migration (immigration, emigration, transmigration and return migration).
- Different types of migration: internal and external, forced and voluntary, legal and illegal, integration of migrants, detention centres, people with asylum seeking or refugee status.
- Integration of migrants in society (Jesuit Refugee Services, United Nations High Commission for Refugees).
- Push and pull factors of migration.
- Urbanisation: advantages (work opportunities, better education and health facilities, and better infrastructure) and disadvantages (traffic congestion and pollution, environmental and social stress, and housing problems); urban sprawl and population density.

Globalisation:

- Definition of globalisation. independence versus interdependence of countries.
- Different aspects of globalisation (economic, technological, social and cultural).
- Positive effects: international solidarity, free trade and protectionism, efforts towards fair trading, cultural enrichment, global mass media, the flexibility of transnational companies (multinationals).
- Negative effects: child-labour and sweatshops, uneven distribution of wealth, international debts, brain drain, environmental degradation, threats to national identity and sovereignty, monopolies of transnational companies, unfair trading.
- World organisations that promote peace (United Nations, Commonwealth).

Essential references

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- Gatt, A. (2008). *Ekwopedja*. Malta: Outlook Coop.
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Additional readings

- Cutajar, J. & Cassar, G. (Eds.) (2009). *Social Transitions in Maltese Society*. Malta: Agenda.
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- Macionis, J.J. and Plummer, K. (2008). *Sociology - A Global Introduction* (3rd edition). Pearson Education Ltd.
- Moore, S. (2001). *Sociology alive* (3rd edition). Gloucestershire: Nelson Thornes.
- Wales, J. (2009). *Citizenship today*. London: Harper Collins Publishing.