

## **1. Category A – One-time special paid leave of up to one (1) scholastic year.**

- (i) A one-time special paid study leave of up to one (1) scholastic year (**Category A**) may be requested by all grade and position holders who have been granted officer in a teaching grade status and/or indefinite status represented in the Agreement between the Government and the Malta Union of Teachers who are in possession of a permanent or temporary teaching warrant and also Kindergarten Assistants and Learning Support Assistants.
- (ii) Applicants will be considered as eligible if they commit themselves to dedicate the paid study leave 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 MEDE from time to time; or
  - e. are directly related to research areas indicated by DRD, other departments within MEDE or College Principals; 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 grade.
- (iii) Due consideration will be given to applicants opting for a course on a full time basis.
- (iv) Eligible applicants for Category A special paid study leave must have at least ten (10) years of satisfactory service in the Educational Class with the Ministry for Education and Employment. Unpaid leave will not be considered as active service. Persons availing themselves of Category A paid study leave of up to one (1) scholastic year will not lose any entitlement to the leave referred to as Category B shorter period of paid study leave.
- (v) Approval will be subject to the exigencies of the Ministry for Employment and Education based on the assurance of continuity of service.
- (vi) Applicants not having classroom duties and are reading for an MQF Level 8 qualification which may or may not be on a part time basis may apply to have the one year paid study leave spread over a maximum period of four (4) years.
- (vii) Applications for Category A special paid leave of up to one (1) scholastic year shall be evaluated by a Paid Study Leave Scheme Board. Final decisions on the

submitted applications will be communicated in writing to the applicants by not later than the 30<sup>th</sup> June of every year.

- (viii) Application forms for Category A special paid leave should reach the Paid Study Leave Scheme Board as stipulated by the Ministry for Education and Employment from time to time. Candidates need to apply for the relevant course with the respective institutions and need to provide proof of acceptance by not later than the first Friday of September of the same year of application to the Paid Study Leave Scheme Board.
- (ix) The Paid Study Leave Scheme Board shall evaluate and base its decision for the Category A special paid study leave applications on the following criteria:
  - a. the relevance of the studies in accordance with the criteria stipulated in Clause iii;
  - b. the recommendations of two (2) referees; ideally these shall be the current line manager **and** the second-level supervisor **or** any previous second-level supervisor or line manager.
  - c. the track record of the applicants, including Curriculum Vitae; and
  - d. any previous paid study leave and unpaid leave granted to the applicant during the previous three (3) scholastic years.
- (x) At the end of any Category A special paid study leave, applicants will need to provide proof of enrollment and active engagement and a concise report on the studies undertaken to the Paid Study Leave Scheme Board by not later than one (1) month from end of study leave. In the case where the duration of the course is longer than one (1) year, the beneficiary is to provide supporting documentary evidence attesting that he/she has fully honoured his/her study commitments during that period in which he/she was on paid study leave.
- (xi) Any requests for studies in Category A which cannot be completed in the one (1) year paid study leave shall be considered in accordance with the provisions of PSMC.

## **2. Category B – Shorter period of paid study leave**

- (i) All grades represented in the Agreement between the Government and the Malta Union of Teachers who are in possession of a permanent or temporary teaching warrant and also Kindergarten Assistants and Learning Support Assistants may apply for a shorter period of paid study leave (**Category B**).
- (ii) Eligible candidates can apply for a shorter period of paid study leave for:
  - a. any course funded by any EU programme provided such courses are directly related to their professional remit or educational projects included in the School Development Plan (SDP). Members of staff can be granted an aggregate duration of study leave totaling up to thirty (30) calendar days; or
  - b. studies which lead to an accredited academic or professional qualification at MQF Level 7 or above and which are related to education in general. Members of staff can be granted an aggregate duration of paid study days which can be of up to six (6) working days for every course of studies; or
  - c. any other studies which would qualify as Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The aggregate duration of these paid study days can be of up to five (5) working days for every scholastic year.
- (iii) Eligible applicants for Category B shorter period of paid study leave must have at least two (2) years of satisfactory service with the Ministry for Education and Employment. Persons availing themselves of Category B shorter period of paid study leave will not lose any entitlement to the leave referred to as Category A one-time special paid leave of up to one (1) scholastic year. However, one will no longer be eligible for Category A paid study leave if s/he would have benefitted more than twice from paid study leave under clause (2) (ii) (a) above.
- (iv) Approval will be subject to the exigencies of the service.
- (v) At the end of any Category B shorter period of paid study leave, applicants will need to provide a certificate of attendance and a concise report on the studies undertaken to the approving authorities by not later than five (5) working days from end of study leave.

### **3. General Provisions – Categories A and B**

- (i) Beneficiaries availing themselves of either Category A special paid study leave or Category B short period of paid study leave must successfully complete their studies. Failure to do so will result in the applicants having to refund the salary paid during the period in question. Beneficiaries will have the right to appeal for a waiver by presenting a substantiated justification in writing to the Paid Study Leave Scheme Board. The Board reserves the right for the final decision.
- (ii) Beneficiaries availing themselves of either Category A special paid study leave or Category B short period of paid study leave cannot be engaged in any form of full or part time gainful employment or undertake full time voluntary work with any voluntary organisation during the paid study leave. Failure to abide by this rule will result in the beneficiaries having to forfeit their right to the remaining period of paid study leave and will be expected to return to work and refund the salary paid from the start of the paid study leave until the said return to work.
- (iii) Applicants in receipt of any other ongoing scholarship shall not be eligible for paid study leave in either Category. Failure to abide by this rule will result in the beneficiaries having to forfeit their right to the remaining period of paid study leave and will be expected to return to work and refund the salary paid from the start of the paid study leave until said return to work.
- (iv) Beneficiaries of paid leave in either Category are to continue in service in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Manual on Staff Development in Public Administration and shall sign the relevant undertakings as per the said Manual. Copy of the undertaking documents are found as per Appendix I and II of this document.
- (v) The successful completion of courses under either Category does not give the beneficiaries the automatic right for promotion and/or qualification allowance.