

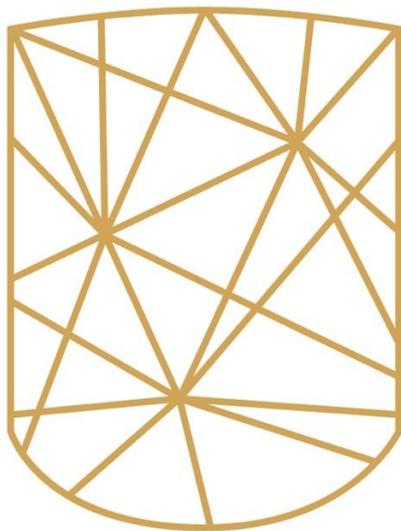


EDU

A DEGREE
SMARTER.

Medical Student Handbook





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EDU MEDICAL STUDENT HANDBOOK

Version 8, valid as of 29th of April 2022

I. WELCOME MESSAGE	5
II. WHY EDU?	6
MISSION STATEMENT	6
VISION	7
CORE VALUES	7
OUR CODE	8
DIGITAL EDUCATION FOR THE 21 ST CENTURY	9
III. E-DIDACTIC CONCEPT	10
PILLARS OF DIDACTIC APPROACH	10
<i>Online Teamwork</i>	10
<i>Peer-To-Peer Learning</i>	10
<i>Mentoring and Tutoring</i>	10
<i>Problem-Based Learning</i>	11
<i>Expert Input</i>	11
IV. GENERAL INFORMATION	12
ACCREDITATIONS, TUITION, AND FEES	12
SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID	12
<i>CHANCEN eG</i>	12
<i>EDU Excellence Scholarship</i>	13
ACADEMIC CALENDAR	13
LIBRARY AND STUDY RESOURCES	13
CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT	13
<i>Evidence-Based Medicine</i>	14
<i>Biomedical Fundamentals</i>	14
<i>Clinical Competencies</i>	14
STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES	15
V. BACHELOR OF MEDICINE (B.MED.)	16
MODULE STRUCTURE	16
<i>Online Phase</i>	17
CLINICAL ROTATIONS	18
<i>Health Requirements for the Clinical Rotation</i>	19
ATTENDANCE POLICY	20
<i>Attendance During the Online Phase</i>	20
<i>Attendance During the Clinical Rotation Phase</i>	20
RESEARCH TRACK	21
BACHELOR THESIS	21
BACHELOR PORTFOLIO	21
VI. ASSESSMENT	23
GRADING SCHEME AND SCALE	23
MODES OF ASSESSMENT	24
<i>Group Assignments</i>	24

<i>Active Participation</i>	24
<i>High-Stakes Assessment</i>	24
<i>OSCE (Objective Structured Clinical Examination)</i>	25
<i>Mock-Test (Ungraded)</i>	25
<i>Clinical Rotation Assessment</i>	26
<i>Thesis Assessment</i>	26
<i>Self-Assessment (Ungraded)</i>	26
STUDENT GRADEBOOK AND TRANSCRIPTS	26
MENTORSHIP FEEDBACK	27
VII. STUDENT SUPPORT	28
LEAVE OF ABSENCE	28
VIII. CONDUCT	29
CODE OF CONDUCT	29
REPORTING MISCONDUCT	30
ACADEMIC AND SCIENTIFIC MISCONDUCT	31
<i>Plagiarism</i>	31
<i>Academic Dishonesty (Cheating)</i>	32
STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES	33
<i>Professional Discretion</i>	33
<i>Adhere to the Rules of Netiquette and Decency</i>	33
<i>Respect Personality Rights and Data Security</i>	33
<i>Virtual Class Behavioural Expectations</i>	34
IX. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	35
REQUIREMENTS	35
TECH SUPPORT	35
X. CONTACT INFORMATION	36

I. WELCOME MESSAGE

Dear EDU Students,

We would like to cordially welcome you on behalf of the entire EDU team. In 2014, an idea arose from a discussion between EDU founder Professor Andreas Hoeft and his son, who was studying medicine at the time. With the end goal of improving medical care worldwide, Prof. Hoeft set out to find a way to make it possible for a wide range of talented young people to study medicine together regardless of their physical location or personal time constraints. It is in pursuit of this vision that we have put together a novel medical curriculum with a learner-centred approach.

From the very beginning, you, as an EDU student, will study medicine in small groups. This collaborative approach is designed to thoroughly prepare you for your future work environment. Together with your peers and our specially trained tutors and mentors, you will engage in meaningful group discussions, learn and practice clinical research, and solve real-world medical problems. These practical skills are further developed during clinical rotations at medical hospitals, where you will observe and work alongside experienced professionals. In addition, our curriculum emphasises the acquisition of soft skills, especially the learning of communicative skills – a fundamental ability for successful doctors.

We at EDU believe that we have created a degree that enables you to not only pursue your passion, but to build a broad network of future colleagues. Please do not hesitate to contact us throughout your time at EDU; we depend on your feedback to maintain a true learner-centred environment.

We wish you every success in this exciting new phase of your life.

*Yours sincerely,
The EDU Team*

II. WHY EDU?

MISSION STATEMENT

“Our education creates and fosters a diverse community, committed to the care of patients, inspired to leadership in evidence-based medicine.”

EDU has the ambition to become the world’s leading digital institution of higher education within the field of medical education. Our programmes strive to unlock the vast potential of our innovative combination of online education and local, decentralised clinical residencies by expanding our reach globally. EDU is committed to the principles of excellence, innovation, transparency, continuous learning and professionalism. We are dedicated to significantly increasing the quality of medical education by focusing on closely monitored practical excellence centred on, but not restricted to, the top ten causes of death. Our curriculum is aligned with the overarching learning objectives of the World Federation of Medical Education (WFME) and the Institute for International Medical Education (IIME).

With current educational capacity, the world is expected to run short of almost 13 million health care workers by 2035. While this gap is already significant in absolute global numbers, it is also unevenly distributed worldwide. We want to help contribute to a solution to this problem by building a world-class medical degree accessible to learners physically located throughout Europe and Africa. Online instruction will be provided through a digital campus based in Malta and run by EDU, with in-person clinical rotations offered locally wherever our students reside. Our goal is to contribute decisively to closing the education gap by establishing an outcomes-oriented curriculum with a scalable teaching model, thus enabling more talented young people to study medicine. We see the potential to reach thousands of new students and professionalise hundreds of hospitals, making them part of a lively global medical education and research community.

With our students spread out over several teaching sites, we look to modern forms of distant digital learning to supplement and enhance the practical training in teaching hospitals. We have designed a collaborative online learning environment which adapts to student needs as well as to recent medical developments. The academic knowledge thereby delivered through this innovative approach emphasises practical experience in clinical hospitals starting from day one. Additionally, we are dedicated to improving the clinical training experience for students by increasing the amount of opportunity for practical experience. We achieve this through working with a network of quality-assured teaching hospitals dispersed wide enough geographically to allow for large ratios of patients per student.

We at EDU believe that investment in medical education will ultimately create new jobs and new opportunities for the next generation of health professionals as well as stimulate economic growth in a more sustainable manner. It is our ambition to improve the care that patients receive, mobilise citizens to advocate for universal health coverage in Europe and beyond, and to contribute to the much-needed increase in the number of health professionals worldwide. We recognise that this ambition can only be achieved through a commitment to EDU's core values and by placing quality of care at the heart of medical education.

With your help, EDU will continue to build a dedicated community of modern, versatile, open-minded health professionals through a medical programme that spans borders.

VISION

EDU is about you. We invite you to become part of a lively group of students from around the world; all committed to becoming outstanding medical professionals and eager to help each other become the best medical professionals they can be.

We view our students as partners as we believe strongly that our programmes can only grow alongside our students. This means that we depend upon your critical, constructive and fair feedback.

We will do everything we can to support you in your journey, giving advice and encouragement, and providing you with a quality education that benefits you, the student, as well as the future patients you will care for.

In the end, it is our dedicated students who will make this experience a great one for all involved. In the end, it is you who will make a difference.

CORE VALUES

At EDU we put students first

We see the individual learner and support them on their personal learning path. We invest in methodologies to leave no learner behind.



At EDU learning means doing

In order to make a difference in the world, our students need applicable knowledge. We always provide access to knowledge and skills required to apply it in the world.



At EDU we teach learning as a skill

A core part of all of our curricula is facilitating learning skills – this gives our students access to lifelong learning, enables them to deal with short half-lives of knowledge and prepares them for a rapidly changing world.

OUR CODE

Provide access to medical education to all who show superior skills and motivation to become medical professionals



Train a generation of medical professionals who combine technical excellence with empathetic care for patients



Integrate clinical expertise, patients' values and best available evidence in decision-making for patients' health care



Foster empowered and engaged communities of health workers to promote innovations and use of evidence



Provide an environment of lifelong learning and student development through mentoring and apprenticeship



Build a curriculum based on evidence-based medicine, collaborative learning, and patient centrality



Foster an inclusive community that values members for their uniqueness, and encourages open and constructive exchange



Respect all individuals for their unique perspectives and potential to contribute



Lead responsibly with accountability and compassionately share constructive feedback



Create a healthy working environment, recognising that this requires the integration of work and life.

DIGITAL EDUCATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

By and large, universities still have not fully embraced the digital age. This is unfortunate as an education system that works predominantly through offline channels overlooks the tremendous advantages of online education and the wide-ranging benefits it can provide for learners, teachers, patients and society at large. Digital medical education has the potential to reach new groups of learners, make accessible the knowledge of a more diverse body of educators, better include the patient's perspective, share knowledge more widely across our societies and empower those that were not previously a part of this knowledge creation.

As a growing educational hub and regulatory innovator firmly embedded in European frameworks, the cosmopolitan and multicultural nation of Malta was a natural choice as EDU's base. This does not mean that you need to move to Malta to study at EDU. Rather, you can now study medicine wherever you want – be it in a new city or your hometown.

At EDU, we have at our disposal exciting new tools and the powerful infrastructures necessary to create a full immersion learning experience. A truly digital medical degree programme must do much more than communicate knowledge over the internet or provide students with an online library; it must create an ecosystem that activates curiosity and collaboration, addresses the academic, personal and social needs of all learners, and accommodates the varying schedules of all stakeholders involved. Technology needs to serve the learners; only then can it improve the learning experience.

EDU embodies the necessary technologies, mindset and cultural techniques that this shift into the digital age requires. It has been built around the idea that knowledge is to be created, shared and reflected freely among the EDU community. We understand education not to be a commodity administered by professorial experts, but a common good co-created by all stakeholders of the EDU community of learners. EDU, therefore, has no professors holding traditional chairs, but rather a flexible and versatile faculty.

We understand EDU to be our flexible platform to form a community of learners so that we all may learn from each other – no matter where and when we do so.

III. e-DIDACTIC CONCEPT

PILLARS OF DIDACTIC APPROACH

EDU's didactic approach is grounded on five pillars: online teamwork; peer-to-peer learning; mentoring and tutoring; problem-based learning; and expert input. They are based on the principles of democratic learning, a methodology which aims to empower individuals by encouraging them to take ownership of their learning experience.

Online Teamwork

Each individual member of the EDU learning community is placed into a team to tackle challenges collectively. Team formation is done based on carefully tailored team-matching criteria in a way that best utilises the common foundations, characteristics and challenges shared by the students. Each team is represented by their own unique team identity and has a shared space for working collaboratively. This team-based process allows students to initiate and develop strong networks, as collaboration becomes integral to each team's success. Moreover, collaboration and communication not only take place between team members, but feedback is exchanged on multiple levels.

Peer-To-Peer Learning

At the core of EDU programmes is a peer-to-peer learning process which engages and motivates each member of the community to exchange experiences, knowledge and feedback with peers.

Mentoring and Tutoring

EDU programmes enable personal interaction between students and supporting staff. EDU staff, in the form of mentors and tutors, provide assistance to the community on a one-on-one or team basis. They help students become effective and efficient learners by helping to facilitate group work, supporting the development of programme communications, monitoring the programme atmosphere, and supporting community engagement and motivation throughout the programme. Mentoring and tutoring create a stimulating learning environment and increase the effectiveness of digital learning.

Problem-Based Learning

Each module presents teams with a series of successive assignments supported by relevant, real-world cases. By tackling the assignments in a continuous process of trial and error, learners gain hands-on practice and finish our programmes having gained valuable skills and capabilities relevant to their daily lives.

Expert Input

Experts inspire the learning community with their expertise and insights on programme topics. These experts provide a broad spectrum of inspiration and conceptual grounding, helping the community to open their minds to new approaches.

IV. GENERAL INFORMATION

ACCREDITATIONS, TUITION, AND FEES

One of EDU's core goals is to support medical education which is responsive to the environment in which it is being taught while directly impacting the well-being of the local community. To achieve this end, EDU provides a more flexible learning model while significantly increasing the quality of academic programmes, placing more emphasis on empathetic care for patients.

Despite the innovative nature of EDU programmes, their content and structure are compatible with the relevant European frameworks and standards to ensure that our students can later go on to work wherever they want. EDU academic programmes are accredited in accordance with European standards by the National Commission on Further and Higher Education in Malta, which has been superseded since January 2020 by the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority.

EDU provides an excellent medical education which does not rely on state subsidies. For this reason, there is a tuition fee, the details of which are outlined in the Student Agreement. The standard tuition fee we charge is 19.500 EUR per academic year and includes access to the digital campus and clinical rotations. The Tuition and Fees Regulations provide a full picture of which other non-recurring fees exist, such as the matriculation fee.

The Tuition and Fee Regulations may be accessed at <https://info.edu.edu.mt/policies/> for more information.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID

As part of an institutional commitment to ensuring the ability to pay does not restrict suitable students from pursuing an education at EDU, various financial aid options exist to support eligible students throughout their studies.

CHANCEN eG

EDU has partnered with CHANCEN eG to provide students with a fair financial solution to cover a part of their tuition fees at EDU. With an Income Share Agreement (ISA), students focus on their studies while enrolled in EDU's medical degree programmes and let CHANCEN eG pay a part of their fees. Following the successful completion of their studies, students start to pay back their tuition fees with income-based repayments over 8 years. Further information is available at <https://chancen-eg.de/partner/edu>.

EDU Excellence Scholarship

The EDU Excellence Scholarship supports students who embody the values EDU seeks in the next generation of medical practitioners and who are committed to contributing to the development of EDU as an institution.

Students are encouraged to check the Student Info Center for published guidelines at <https://info.edu.edu.mt/scholarships/>.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

EDU students progress through three 14-week modules each academic year, with holiday breaks occurring during the winter, spring, and summer. Given the flexible nature of EDU programmes, new academic calendars are created for each new module phase.

<https://info.edu.edu.mt/module-outlines/> may be accessed for more information about specific module schedules.

LIBRARY AND STUDY RESOURCES

Students have access to an extensive digital library curated specifically for each programme of study. The EDU library is constantly evolving and growing.

Students may visit <https://study.edu.edu.mt/#/library> to explore current offerings and <https://info.edu.edu.mt> for study resources, guides, and tutorials.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

The medical curriculum at EDU combines internationally established methods with the latest innovations in medicine, drawing upon learning catalogues from different countries and undergoing constant adaptations as healthcare and medicine progress. Student and faculty feedback is frequently used to update and refine our curriculum, constantly evolving to the needs of the current healthcare systems and our students.

The curriculum team at EDU follows the KERN Cycle, which consists of:

1. Problem identification/ general needs assessment
2. Targeted needs assessment
3. Goals and objectives
4. Educational strategies

5. Implementation
6. Evaluation and feedback

This procedure ensures that the quality of the curriculum will continuously be enhanced and remains flexible to incorporate changes to the healthcare systems as well as the needs of our students.

Evidence-Based Medicine

Medical students who have been trained at EDU are equipped to deliver the highest possible quality of medical treatment to their patients and are therefore taught the principles of evidence-based medicine from the very start of undergraduate studies. To apply evidence-based medicine successfully, students need profound knowledge of statistical variables in addition to traditional medical training and foundational knowledge.

It is paramount that students learn how to interpret and analyse data sources according to the criteria of evidence-based medicine and apply these insights to facilitate the best possible treatment for each individual patient. This approach propels medical education based on scientific findings and accelerates the understanding of current research results.

Biomedical Fundamentals

The Institute for International Medical Education's Core Committee has developed the concept of "Global Minimum Essential Requirements" and defined a set of global minimum learning outcomes, which students of all medical schools must demonstrate at the point of graduation. The "Essentials" are grouped under seven broad educational domains with a set of sixty learning objectives in total. Sixteen Biomedical Fundamentals are integrated from early on in the EDU curriculum and are continuously reviewed throughout the course of study while being linked to clinical subjects.

Clinical Competencies

All EDU students must learn and demonstrate a set of predetermined basic practical skills. These skills will be practised and tested longitudinally in teaching hospitals during clinical rotations. Regular feedback enables students to detect weaknesses and to improve continuously. This set of skills was determined based on the framework and learning objectives set forth by The Tuning Project for Medicine of the European Union; an initiative designed to establish core competencies for undergraduate medical education in Europe.

In medicine, technical skills consist of physical examinations and treatments carried out by medical personnel as well as complex procedures such as operations and treatments carried

out within the intensive care unit setting. Students must understand that patient safety plays a significant role, both from a financial point of view, as well as from the perspective of patients and ultimately the society. Patient safety can only be achieved if technical and professional skills are applied together.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

EDU students have several avenues to become involved in decision-making processes at the institutional level. Students may run for election as a cohort representative and become a member of the Student Council. Student representatives are also active members of various academic bodies of EDU like the Assessment Committee or the Academic Board.

Specific information about the election procedures for student representatives to academic bodies of EDU can be found at <https://info.edu.edu.mt/policies/> under Academic Policies.

V. BACHELOR OF MEDICINE (B.MED.)

The B.Med. is a full-time study programme where students progress through 9 modules designed to be completed in 3 years. Each module combines theory and practice, delivered through virtual and clinical environments.

The B.Med. lays the foundational knowledge for medical students to build on during the Master of Medicine. The EDU curriculum implements a spiral of learning principle, which is constantly building on prior knowledge. Throughout the nine trimesters of the B.Med. programme students will rotate throughout periods of theory and integration and application of knowledge into a clinical environment. Students will not experience entire modules of anatomy or physiology as they would experience at other institutions, rather the knowledge will be linked to clinical correlations and revisited at strategic points throughout the curriculum to build on prior knowledge and advance the learning process.

MODULE STRUCTURE

As mentioned above, each academic year is divided into three 14-week modules.

The first ten weeks of a module consist of an extensive online learning phase. During that phase, students work on clinical, biomedical and non-technical learning objectives. The theoretical phase of each module lays the groundwork for the upcoming practical phase of each module.

In week ten of the online learning phase, students take their High-Stakes Assessment and have the opportunity to travel to the site of the subsequent clinical rotation.

The final four weeks of each module are dedicated to the clinical rotation. Through a close connection to experienced clinicians, EDU students have the opportunity to gain practical experience under close supervision at their selected clinical rotation site. The clinicians at our teaching hospitals, referred to as Clinical Teachers, supervise students and provide valuable feedback according to professional feedback rules.



Figure 1: Module Structure

Online Phase

The online phase of each module provides students with theoretical knowledge that will ultimately be drawn upon during clinical rotation and subsequent modules. During this time, students are expected to attend a variety of synchronous sessions led by tutors, experts, and mentors to support the attainment of learning outcomes. Most sessions focus on active learning using the flipped classroom model, putting students at the centre of the classroom. This means EDU students use class time to apply their knowledge with their group and team members through collaborative activities and peer-to-peer learning, with instructors as experienced facilitators.

Tutor Sessions

Tutor sessions are virtual classroom sessions that are facilitated by a Tutor. As an active learning environment, these sessions allow students to deepen their knowledge of the learning materials. Students are expected to have studied the material independently before attending these sessions. They are also interactive and communicative, emphasising peer-to-peer learning and teamwork.

Expert Sessions

These sessions are either run by an internal or external expert in the field, who covers the topic(s) of the week. These are run in an active learning environment, and similar to other active learning sessions, students are expected to actively participate and prepare prior to the session.

Medical English

Medical English sessions are active learning sessions facilitated by a tutor. They are opportunities for students to strengthen their medical terminology through learning activities. Active participation is expected.

Professionalism Sessions

This is a social competence curriculum based on the CanMEDS framework, concerning the overarching topic of medical professionalism. These series aim to prepare the students for their future professional responsibilities and adherence to ethical principles, led by tutors.

Coaching Sessions

Coaching sessions are run by a mentor who is trained to coach students through their personal, professional, and academic goals. These sessions are built to support self-

regulated learning, a crucial steppingstone to becoming a self-directed learner. Coaching sessions can occur in a group or 1:1 format.

Group Assignment (GA) and GA Sessions

This is a written medical case, virtual simulation, or an audio or video recording of a medical case that students work on in teams using Problem-Based Learning and Case-Based Learning. During the online phase, cases will be introduced during Group Assignment Introduction sessions and students will continue to collaborate to complete their assignments outside of class time. For assignments requiring a verbal presentation of the findings, a Group Assignment Conference is also scheduled.

Problem-Based Learning

Throughout the Bachelor of Medicine there is a significant emphasis on problem-based learning (PBL). This method of learning provides an opportunity to hone a variety of skills which are not always possible with frontal lectures and alternative teaching or learning methodologies. By placing students at the centre of the learning process and rotating throughout the various PBL roles, students also practice their ability to engage within a multidisciplinary team as preparation for their future clinical careers. PBL is not only essential for learning a variety of skills and getting accustomed to teamwork, but also provides a sound foundation for the development of knowledge and assessment of the clinical application of knowledge, under the close supervision of an experienced medical tutor.

Clinical Rotations

Students gain first-hand insight into clinical practices beginning with their very first module. Clinical rotations are complemented by online learning, allowing for hands-on medical experience at our partner teaching hospitals. Predefined practical learning objectives are assessed continuously during the clinical rotations by clinical experts, referred to as Clinical Teachers.

The Rotation Manager is responsible for the coordination of your schedules at the teaching hospitals and acts as the contact person for Clinical Teachers during the clinical rotation phase. The Rotation Manager is the first contact for everything related to the clinical rotation. The Clinical Teachers are responsible for all teaching efforts during the clinical rotation and contribute to the clinical skills development of students. Students will be assigned by the Rotation Manager to a Clinical Teacher to accompany them throughout their four-week clinical rotation. Under the close supervision of their Clinical Teacher, students will deepen their theoretical knowledge and learn how to perform practical skills.

A key tool for tracking skill and competency development will be the Clinical Skills Catalogue. Students should practice the skills listed within this catalogue under the observation of their Clinical Teacher with different levels of autonomy, namely:

- **Observer Role** – Student has observed experts performing the skill and can explain the procedure of the skill
- **Assistant Role** – Student is able to perform the skill with appropriate guidance and can explain the skill
- **Performer Role** – Student is able to perform the skill autonomously under supervision

Clinical rotation information, including details on the Clinical Skills Catalogue, can be found at <https://info.edu.edu.mt/clinical-skills/>.

Health Requirements for the Clinical Rotation

Once students are assigned to their Teaching Hospital, they will receive a list from EDU with required documents to be submitted before the commencement of their clinical rotation. Depending upon the assigned teaching hospital, students may be required to provide a health certificate from their doctor stating that they are free of contagious diseases and that they are physically and mentally able to perform the duties required of them during the clinical rotation. If a student does not fulfil the requirements of the Teaching Hospital, they may be prevented from participation in their clinical rotation.

The same applies if a student does not present a valid vaccination certificate, or proof of recent titre for the following diseases at the beginning of each clinical rotation:

- **Mumps, measles, rubella, chickenpox:** vaccination or titre test results
- **Hepatitis A:** 2-dose vaccine series or titre test results (note: students may enter the first clinical rotation having received only their first dose, but must be scheduled to receive their second dose)
- **Hepatitis B:** 3-dose vaccine series or titre test result of >100 mIU/mL
- **Tetanus, diphtheria:** fully vaccinated with booster received within the last 10 years
- **Whooping cough (pertussis):** fully vaccinated with booster received within the last 10 years
- **COVID-19:** vaccination or titre test results in accordance with current hospital and national regulations

Furthermore, students must present EDU a certificate verifying that they have successfully completed a First Aid Course of no less than 9 teaching hours (9 x 45 minutes) within the

previous two years. The certificate must be forwarded to EDU no later than 14 days prior to the commencement of the Clinical Rotation. Evidence of first aid training includes, but is not limited to: Arbeiter-Samariter-Bundes Deutschland e.V., Deutsches Rotes Kreuz, Johanniter-Unfall-Hilfe, Malteser-Hilfsdienstes e.V.

NOTE: Students who do not fulfil the above requirements may be barred from being admitted to or from progressing with their studies. Failure to disclose information to the hospital's occupational health service about a physical or mental health problem that could affect patient safety is considered a serious breach of the EDU Code of Conduct that could lead to ex-matriculation.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The EDU attendance policy is summarised below. The full Student Assessment Policy may be accessed at <https://info.edu.edu.mt/policies/> under Assessment Regulations.

Attendance During the Online Phase

Attendance is required during all scheduled synchronous sessions of an online phase. Students must have attended no less than 70% of all group synchronous sessions in the online phase of any given module. A student is marked as having attended a synchronous session when they have been present and participatory for at least 75% of the session, with their camera on.

Failure to meet the minimum attendance requirement may result in the student being unable to sit the high-stakes assessment; the student must instead retake the respective module. The most updated version of the *Assessment Regulations* for all details and stipulations concerning attendance at EDU may be found at <https://info.edu.edu.mt/policies/>.

Attendance During the Clinical Rotation Phase

Attendance is required during the entire duration of the clinical rotation in the assigned teaching hospital. Students must make up for any absence in excess of three days. This will be organised separately and will occur at a future date. It is not permitted to leave a clinical rotation early even if the student has unused permitted absence days at the end of their rotation. Students who are found to exploit the attendance policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

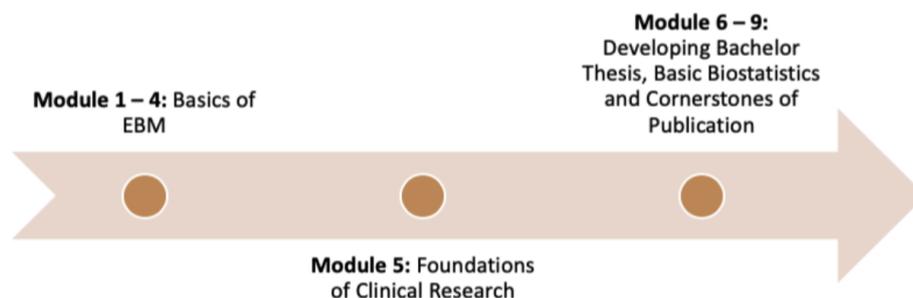
If a student must be absent, they must immediately inform their hospital ward, as well as Student Affairs, and present a valid reason along with corresponding documentation.

RESEARCH TRACK

The research track at EDU prepares students for the Bachelor and Master of Medicine research projects. It is distributed throughout the Bachelor programme and consists of foundations of clinical research, ethical and medicolegal aspects of clinical research, basic biostatistics for clinical research, introduction to epidemiology research, clinical trial design, literature appraisal, journal club, monitoring and data documentation in clinical trials and cornerstones of publication.

BACHELOR THESIS

EDU's students are introduced to the basic principles of evidence-based medicine (EBM) from the first weeks of their studies. From mid of year 2 onwards, they receive and are introduced to how clinical research questions are developed, how clinical study design is created from scratch, and how a clinical study synopsis is written in full. In addition, students learn how to reflect on the ethical dimensions of clinical study design by analysing and formulating applications to the ethics committee. Bachelor Thesis work is to be centred around these topics. The understanding of clinical research will be deepened in the M.Med. programme.



The research track offerings, mentioned above, serve to assist students in building the skillset necessary to produce a meaningful Bachelor Thesis. There are four options for thesis format: review article, critical appraisal, case study and case study series. Students and supervisors will decide on the most appropriate format based on the thesis topic and student interest. All theses, regardless of format, will follow the same basic structural guidelines, outlined in detail in the Bachelor of Medicine Thesis Guidelines at <https://info.edu.edu.mt/policies/>.

BACHELOR PORTFOLIO

Throughout their time at EDU, students will contribute to a portfolio - a collection of materials created by a learner documenting their achievements and, importantly, reflections on these achievements. During the B.Med. programme, the portfolio will include a key focus on demonstrated development of

professionalism skills, as informed in large part by the CanMEDS framework for physician competencies. Information on portfolio supervisors and portfolio processes will be communicated by EDU faculty once required.

VI. ASSESSMENT

At EDU, “assessment” refers to all forms of assessment that are used to award a mark and/or grade that contributes towards the awarding of a degree. Assessments are intended to provide students, educators, and other stakeholders with timely feedback during all phases of the B.Med. programme as well as to ultimately provide proof of acquired knowledge and skills. We value assessments as a key facet of teaching and learning at EDU as they allow students and educators alike to diagnose the strengths and weaknesses of each individual student in order to target specific needs, foster the learning process of students, and to monitor the progress of students and the rate at which they are progressing. Furthermore, assessment allows EDU to measure and promote the quality of its teaching and curriculum.

Methods of assessment may include written supervised assessments, high-stake assessments, oral assessments, group assignments, short or long essays, bachelor or master theses, clinical or practical assessments including workplace-based assessments or Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCE’s), projects, portfolios, case studies, logbooks, continuous assessment of placement and any other method of assessment approved by the Assessment Committee (see Committees section for more information).

All written and oral assessments will be conducted in English. Clinical, practical and oral assessments involving real or standardised patients can occur in the native language spoken at the location of the teaching hospital.

The following sections summarise EDU assessment policy. Students are encouraged to reference the Student Info Center’s Policies and Regulations page for the Student Assessment Regulation in full at <https://info.edu.edu.mt/policies/>.

GRADING SCHEME AND SCALE

Students earn ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) points per module, provided the module has been successfully passed.

EDU grades are awarded on a letter scheme, distributing a letter grade for the module based on the percentage mark earned for the module, as shown below:

Mark Range	Grade
96 – 100%	A+
90 – 95%	A
86 – 89%	B+
80 – 85%	B
76 – 79%	C+
70 – 75%	C
66 – 69%	D+
60 – 65%	D
00 – 59%	F

MODES OF ASSESSMENT

EDU has several modes of assessment, including group assignments, active participation, high-stakes assessment, OSCEs and more. Below is information on what each of these assessments are and where to find the most relevant resources. For detailed information and guidance, including information on the grading of assessments, students are encouraged to refer to the most up-to-date version of the Student Assessment Policy at <https://info.edu.edu.mt/policies/>.

Group Assignments

Group assignments are an integral component of the EDU curriculum. The number of group assignments per module and the module grade percentage which they account for will differ based on module. Verbal group assignments, written group assignments, and interactive case studies are all graded according to their respective templates, available for viewing in the Group Assignment and Active Participation Grading Guidelines at <https://info.edu.edu.mt/policies/>.

Active Participation

Active participation is the consistent and simultaneous engagement of students in a learning environment by speaking, writing and carrying out activities that are directly related to the content of the synchronous session. Active participation involves all students and increases the rate and degree of learning. Active participation is crucial to the EDU classroom and to the student learning process.

High-Stakes Assessment

The online learning phase of a module concludes with a high-stakes assessment, which covers the learning objectives and outcomes of a module, held on dates approved by the Student

Affairs department. High-stakes assessment dates are communicated to students prior to the start of a module via the Module Outline.

High-stakes assessments are conducted online and proctored; with a duration of approximately 60 minutes. Students must use an external webcam, which can be freely moved and positioned where required by the proctor during the assessment. Students should familiarise themselves with the rules and regulations of proctored assessments before participating in their first high-stakes assessment. Please see <https://info.edu.edu.mt/policies/> for more details.

For guides to the high-stakes assessment and tips for approaching its multiple-choice questions, students will find materials located under Assessments in the Guides and Tutorials section of the EDU Info Center at <https://info.edu.edu.mt/guides-and-tutorials/>.

Students are afforded the opportunity to resit high-stakes exams in situations including but not limited to absence or failure of the initial attempt. The Student Assessment Policy at <https://info.edu.edu.mt/policies/> details general regulations regarding high-stakes assessment resits, while the Assessment section of the Guides and Tutorials page of the EDU Info Center provides specific details on registration for high-stakes assessment resit attempts at <https://info.edu.edu.mt/policies/>.

OSCE (Objective Structured Clinical Examination)

An OSCE assesses clinical competence of medical students. Students are examined in a simulated clinical environment, rotating between different stations to complete a series of activities. An OSCE can be formative or summative.

Mock-Test (Ungraded)

In order to help students familiarise themselves with the high-stakes assessment environment and gauge preparedness, students are given the opportunity to sit a voluntary mock exam during the online phase of their first module.

This mock exam is not part of any final grade but is an instrumental part of empowering learners to make the most of their educational experience as well as to ensure that students will not face any technical difficulties during their high-stakes assessment.

Clinical Rotation Assessment

A student's performance in the clinical rotation phase is evaluated by the attainment of clinical skills that are part of EDU's clinical skills catalogue, at growing levels of autonomy as certified by the student's Clinical Teacher.

EDU's clinical logbook aims to record student progress in the attainment of clinical skills as per the EDU clinical skills catalogue during clinical rotations by providing a recommendation of clinical skills to be taught and maintaining a record of achievement. Students receive access to the clinical skills catalogue and their clinical logbook before the start of each clinical rotation.

Clinical rotation assessments may be conducted with a patient, a simulated patient, simulator or dummy. The examinee should be able to correctly demonstrate and explain practical skills and/or clinical competencies which correspond to the level of their training. In addition to practical skills and/or clinical competencies, students may be assessed on their professionalism, entailing the social competence skills with a real or simulated patient.

At the end of each clinical rotation students are expected to hand in the relevant documentation as defined in the Clinical Rotation Section in the Student Info Center: <https://info.edu.edu.mt/clinical-skills/>.

Thesis Assessment

The Bachelor of Medicine thesis serves as proof that the student has learned basic scientific techniques during the three-year B.Med. programme at EDU which enables them to pursue a scientific question. For the latest thesis guidelines and expectations, students should reference <https://info.edu.edu.mt/policies/>.

Self-Assessment (Ungraded)

Self-assessments are formative, voluntary, non-graded assessments that allow students to better self-regulate their learning and their understanding of various learning objectives. Commonly, these take the form of multiple-choice question quizzes.

STUDENT GRADEBOOK AND TRANSCRIPTS

The Student Gradebook, located on the learning platform, allows students to view their grades in a digital format. The time between submission of an assignment or assessment and the entering of the awarded grade into the Student Gradebook varies depending on the assignment type. Transcripts are

available through Student Affairs. The Student Assessment Policy, found at <https://info.edu.edu.mt/policies/>, provides more detailed information.

MENTORSHIP FEEDBACK

Mentors promote the personal and professional development of students. Their role is to provide feedback on individual student progress, encourage reflection throughout the learning process, and to evaluate their continuous assessments.

Each student will be assigned a mentor by EDU at the beginning of their studies. Mentor and mentee work together to develop the student's personal competencies throughout the B.Med. programme during regular reflective conversations. The mentor functions as a role-model, provides emotional and career support, facilitates insight and change, provides valuable feedback and helps develop students' goals.

For further information regarding the passing and awarding of credit, exceptional circumstances, registration/cancellation of exams, appeal processes and more, students should consult the latest assessment regulations and assessment guidelines at <https://info.edu.edu.mt/policies/>.

VII. STUDENT SUPPORT

EDU is dedicated to supporting students' mental health and wellbeing. Similarly, EDU works with students on a case-by-case basis to ensure an accessible and accommodating learning environment. Students are encouraged to reach out to their mentor as the first line of support, and to make use of the following support structures whenever the need presents:

- Mentors and Tutors engage with our students to motivate them and to learn about the individual student's needs and how to improve his or her learning path.
- Students who have problems related to their academic course can make use of the services of the Student Affairs.
- We provide personal counselling for students who are experiencing problems of a more personal nature. Dedicated mentors are available to directly support students on site.
- Should a student not have found adequate help from any of these bodies, they can always contact the Pro-Dean of Teaching or the Dean directly.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

A Leave of Absence (LoA) is defined as a period when a student takes a complete break from their studies and intends to resume at a future date. More information on the LoA duration, application process, approval, and tuition reductions can be found in the EDU Student Assessment Policy at <https://info.edu.edu.mt/policies/> under the Assessment Regulations section. Additionally, The Student Affairs department is available for further support and advice and can be contacted via studentaffairs@edu.edu.mt.

VIII. CONDUCT

CODE OF CONDUCT

At EDU, we trust our students to be responsible and respectful towards each other. We trust our teachers to be appreciative and supportive of their students. Every community of learners and teachers needs rules that inform our interactions. Rules create trust among the members of a community. They help us predict behaviour and protect vulnerable members of our community. This Code of Conduct allows us to flourish as a community, helping us to create an atmosphere where we can learn and work together – even without a physical campus.

Honesty, appreciation and respect are the cornerstones of community and collaboration at EDU. Here, misconduct is not simply a breach of trust. It can be harmful and have serious consequences for individual members of our community. Misconduct means any kind of ill-intended behaviour or action taken towards others, such as misbehaviour in research and scholarly activities, sexual misconduct of any kind, including sexual and gender-based harassment and violence, domestic and intimate partner violence, and stalking and bullying.

We take every allegation seriously. All members of the EDU community, students and teachers alike, are encouraged to approach the Dean, should they have any information concerning an act of misconduct. Those affected can contact the Dean in person or anonymously. If the allegations suggest an act of misconduct, the Dean will initiate an investigation of the matter.

Accused students must be heard. If an accused student chooses not to attend his or her hearing, the case may be heard and determined in the student's absence. The offending student has the right to be accompanied by one other person of their choice for assistance. All hearings are held in private and remain confidential.

If a student violates EDU's rules of conduct, a period of probation may be agreed upon in addition to any other sanction that may have been imposed. During this time, the student and his or her behaviour are carefully observed and assessed. The Dean will be in charge of monitoring the student. If the student's behaviour improves, the probationary period will be lifted. If the probationary period reveals any wrongdoing, the Dean will affect other sanctions and notify the affected student in writing.

In most cases of misconduct, the student will be given the opportunity to correct such conduct under the guidance and mentorship of the faculty. Penalties will be applied when the offence is proven. All EDU committees have the right to add comments to the student's file, documenting results from any proven misconduct. Expulsion from EDU is also an option. Expulsion results in an immediate

termination of the Student Agreement. The student is not entitled to recover the study fees paid up to this time.

A written appeal or complaint must be sent by the alleged wrongdoer to the Dean within five working days after she or he has been officially notified of the violation. A written explanation on a substantive basis is required to initiate the appeals process. Inappropriate or untrue statements may lead to the expulsion of the student. Within ten working days after receipt of the complaint, the student will receive a written notification on how EDU will proceed in the matter.

REPORTING MISCONDUCT

We need our students to be inquisitive and reflective. You can always raise any question or report any concerns you might have through the channels of communication we provide to this end. First-level support will always be provided by your tutor and your mentor. Administrative questions related to your studies should be directly addressed to the Student Affairs department.

If problems or questions cannot be adequately solved, you can always contact the Dean. This may be done either anonymously or using your own name. At all times, we assure absolute confidentiality of the request and attempts will be made to find a satisfactory solution for the student.

We take our responsibility to protect vulnerable students from sexual misconduct very seriously – both online and offline. We define sexual misconduct as discrimination or harassment (see below), sexual assault, sexual exploitation, rape, dating violence, intimate partner violence, domestic violence or stalking. Appeals to the Dean can be made either in person or anonymously. We acknowledge the sensitivity of the topic and realise that it can be challenging to step forward in such a case. So, we need your help in preventing and reporting sexual misconduct on all levels and encourage all of you to involve EDU as soon as you notice inappropriate behaviour.

Sexual harassment is a form of harassment that is specifically targeted at a person's sex. Sexual harassment is not tolerated at EDU and is classified as unlawful. Sexist and gender-related degrading and embarrassing remarks fall into this category, as well as inappropriate actions and unwanted physical approaches. If sexual harassment is experienced or observed at EDU, students should contact the office of the Dean.

In addition to sexual harassment, unprofessional behaviour of EDU employees and partners should also be reported by our students. This includes all forms of discrimination regardless of whether to offence occurs virtually or in-person. Complaints of any kind should be communicated to the office of the Dean. Each case will be strictly confidential. Misconduct and harassment against our students on the part of EDU's staff or partners will be addressed. Repeated misconduct will lead to severe

consequences, which range from prohibiting direct contact with students to the immediate termination of employment.

ACADEMIC AND SCIENTIFIC MISCONDUCT

Higher education relies on good academic practice: on honesty and transparency throughout the research process. The sensitivity of the data involved makes ethical research behaviour especially important.

In addition to plagiarism and academic dishonesty, both defined in detail below, fabrication and falsification are considered serious breaches in EDU regulations. In our context, fabrication is defined as making up data or results and recording or reporting them; while falsification is defined as manipulating research materials, equipment, processes or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record.

Honest errors or differences of opinion are not considered to be misconduct. The Assessment Committee is charged with the management of individual academic and scientific misconduct cases.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the unauthorised use of another author's thoughts, sentences and publications and representing them as one's own work without proper citation. Plagiarism is highly unethical and leads to unprofessional academic behaviour. The following forms of plagiarism are strictly prohibited at EDU:

- **Verbatim:** Word for word quotation without clear acknowledgement of the original author and proper citation. It must always be clear to the reader which section of the work belongs to the student and which section belongs to another author.
- **Paraphrasing:** Paraphrasing is the practice of restating another author's work, either by altering the language or by using other words. This is also considered plagiarism if the work of the original author is not cited properly.
- **Incorrect Citation:** All citations at EDU follow the Vancouver style guidelines. Every book, journal, review article and text passage from the internet must be cited in accordance with the Vancouver style. Every reader must be able to verify all citations. Whenever possible, citations should be derived from primary sources. However, if it is only possible to gain access to the primary source through a secondary text, then it must be made clear that the citation was derived from a secondary source.

- **Cutting and Pasting:** Using the copy and paste function in order to create text within a couple of minutes is not allowed. In most cases this is also a copyright infringement that can carry legal penalties.
- **Collusion:** Any unauthorised collaboration between students is called collusion. This can occur when students work on a project together. Students working in teams have to follow all regulations pertaining to group assignments. At every stage, any individual and collaborative work must be clearly identified.
- **Failure to acknowledge assistance:** Substantive changes to your work that have been made through fellow students or other external sources must be acknowledged. Use of professional agencies or ghost-writers is strictly prohibited.

EDU uses software to review students' written work for plagiarism. If 5 to 10% of the work is identified as plagiarism, points will be deducted from the respective grade. If 10% or more of the work is identified as plagiarism, the student will receive 0 points for their work and fail the assessment. The Assessment Committee can apply further penalties depending on the severity of the plagiarism.

For students' personal use, we recommend the use of the citation programme called Mendeley, which is free of charge and can be downloaded online. For any questions concerning correct citation procedures, please consult your Tutor or Mentor.

Academic Dishonesty (Cheating)

Academic dishonesty (cheating) is defined as an attempt to create an unfair academic advantage for oneself. Fraud, forgery, dishonesty in academic assignments, or attempts to use materials that are prohibited or inappropriate during assessments are all defined as cheating and will be treated as such. EDU has a zero-tolerance policy for cheating and all counts are considered serious offences.

Cheating can lead to expulsion from EDU. Any action taken by EDU will depend on the severity and the frequency of the attempts to cheat. To avoid any confusion, the specific conditions for each examination and the permitted aids are always specified in the relevant regulations or guidelines.

Infringements of these specifications of any kind will be investigated by the Assessment Committee. Offending students will be questioned about the incident in an investigative hearing, to which they may bring one other person of their choice for assistance. The final decision of the Assessment Committee will be communicated to the student in writing.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Professional Discretion

As students of medicine, you are bound by the same professional standards and obligations as those medical professionals you aspire to become. At the core of these obligations lies professional discretion, or medical confidentiality. This includes patient-physician confidentiality during (and after) your clinical rotations, but also the confidentiality of all medical, research and student records. Since all of us at EDU deal with sensitive data in one way or another, we are all held to the same professional standards – be it as doctor, examiner, teacher, researcher, tutor, student. By not taking confidentiality seriously the trust among our community at EDU would suffer tremendously.

During clinical rotations, all of you have to follow the rules of your respective teaching hospital – an obligation that goes far beyond the protection of privacy and professional discretion. Your teaching hospital may require you to sign a statement to this effect.

Professional discretion is first and foremost a legal requirement. After all, you have to follow the law, our privacy policies and the obligations that result from your Student Agreement. You will also sign a confidentiality agreement with your teaching hospital. A breach of any of these obligations can lead to ex-matriculation, so talk to your mentor and your Module Coordinator if you have any doubts.

Adhere to the Rules of Netiquette and Decency

Compliance with online netiquette is paramount in the context of collaborative learning in a digital environment. At EDU, collaborative learning takes place through free and open discussion set in a friendly and respectful climate. Discussions should be conducted in a fair and factual manner at all times. EDU aims to provide a protected space where students are able to learn undisturbed and to be valued as a member of our community. Students who do not follow our netiquette will be subject to sanctions. Contributions that are defamatory, offensive, politically or religiously extreme, racist or sexist, xenophobic, discriminatory, pornographic or otherwise punishable by law will be deleted and reported by tutors and mentors. The same is true for posts that violate personality rights, are dangerous to youth or call to violence.

Respect Personality Rights and Data Security

EDU is committed to protecting the personality rights of all employees and students. We do everything within our power to prevent and to counteract abusive data processing. This is

based on our understanding that every human being is free to decide with whom, when and what personal data to exchange. After you leave EDU, you are entitled to have all personal data deleted, except for data we need by law to document your performance records.

EDU students you have an obligation to follow the laws on data protection, our internal regulations, privacy and data protection policies and all other obligations that may result from your Student Agreement. A breach of any of these obligations can have serious consequences. Contact your mentor or the Student Affairs department over any related concerns.

Virtual Class Behavioural Expectations

During the digital learning phase, you are expected to maintain the same professional etiquette that you might associate with offline classes at traditional universities.

This means you must:

- Be respectful of your tutors, mentors and experts at all times.
- Adequately prepare for sessions – our sessions are built on peer interactions and failing to be prepared to do your part robs your peers of the opportunity to engage in meaningful discussion.
- Make sure you are well equipped for the session, which means having hardware that works and a strong internet connection. It is your responsibility to ensure you have adequate conditions to engage with your peers using a webcam, microphone and without interruption; failure to do so will impact active participation grading.
- Show up for virtual classes on time and keep your webcam on during these sessions. Though no official dress code exists, students are expected to maintain a professional appearance. Smoking and eating during virtual class are considered inappropriate.

For the full Code of Conduct, please see <https://info.edu.edu.mt/policies/>.

IX. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

REQUIREMENTS

All EDU students must supply their own laptop. The laptop must have a camera function and a reliable internet connection with a minimum speed of 1+ Mbps. This is necessary to be able to log into the learning platform, process group assignments, manage the gradebook, and learn, read and communicate with others. Signing up for high-stakes assessments is also only possible through a student's device. EDU cannot provide its students with laptops, so students must make sure their device works in EDU's digital environment.

Downloading the latest software updates and using an antivirus software as well as a backup device is highly recommended. Devices should be updated with the latest web browser and include a word processor. Supported browsers include Chrome, Firefox, MS Edge and Safari.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they have adequate conditions and good functioning hardware to take part in all synchronous sessions during the online learning phase. These classes should always be attended with a functioning webcam, microphone and in conditions that allow for interaction with peers and instructors effectively. During clinical rotations, students are required to have a cell phone capable of receiving text messages and phone calls.

In order to participate in proctored high-stakes assessments students are required to use an external webcam, which can be freely moved and positioned where required by the proctor during the exam.

TECH SUPPORT

Being a digital educational institution, EDU employs an IT infrastructure that is both proven and reliable. IT support is available to students at fixed times throughout the working week. All IT systems required for EDU studies are monitored and maintained around the clock so that the software and network systems at EDU run smoothly. If disturbances do occur, the EDU support team should be notified immediately so that they may provide a prompt response.

Students may use the "Report an Issue" button in the footer of the learning platform to ask for technical support. If the platform cannot be accessed or the issue is more urgent in nature, support@edu.edu.mt can be contacted for assistance.

X. CONTACT INFORMATION

You will find issue-specific contact information located in the relevant sections of the learning platform or EDU Info Center. Please also remember that your mentor will be available to answer your questions at any time.

For general queries, please consult our FAQ page, located on the learning platform, at https://study.edu.edu.mt/#/faq/FAQ_T_001.

For technical support, please use the “Report an Issue” button in the footer of the learning platform. If you cannot access the platform, you may contact support@edu.edu.mt for assistance.

For administrative topics, you may reach out to us via email at studentaffairs@edu.edu.mt.

Finally, we highly value your feedback. Please visit the Feedback section at <https://info.edu.edu.mt/> to provide anonymous feedback on any topic at any time.