

Home Economics

in Maltese Secondary Schools



An Information Booklet

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Home Economics

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Written & Produced by: Glorianne Gerada B.Ed (Hons.) Home Economics (Year group: 2005-2009)

Reviewed by: Dr. Suzanne Piscopo **In Collaboration with:** Elizabeth Mallia, EO Home Economics & Textiles Studies

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Introduction to Home Economics

Formerly referred to as 'Housecraft' or 'Domestic Science', Home Economics education in Malta has evolved from the domesticity-oriented subject of the 1920s to the 1970s, to the comprehensive, dynamic, multi-skill subject we have today.

The Origins of Home Economics

Dealing mainly with tutoring in needlework, cookery, child care, home embellishment, housekeeping, Housecraft and Domestic Science, like in other countries, became the means through which young Maltese girls were given instruction to become the ideal housewives.



These subjects gained a lot of popularity at that time, when it was very rare for female students to pursue a career.

The Evolution of Home Economics

In July 1974, the first Executive Committee of the Home Economics and Needlework Teachers Association (HENTA) was established. This new association strove to promote



Development of the subject locally, organise courses and networking opportunities for teachers and, consequently, provide a more sound delivery of both Home Economics and Needlework. HENTA lasted till the mid-1990s, only to re-emerge as a fresh dynamic association, by the name of Home Economists in Action (HEiA), in 2002.

HEiA is a thriving, active association whose goal is to enhance Home Economics education in Malta, whilst promoting and delivering quality health, consumer, family, textiles and environment education to Maltese youths.

Home Economics Today

Today Home Economics in Malta has an established role. Taught in the majority of girls' and boys' state secondary schools, as well as many non-state schools, Home Economics gives students the unique opportunity to develop skills, knowledge and attitudes for personal wellbeing and which provide access to vocational, academic and professional work in the future.

Home Economics teaches me a lot about life. It is more than a school subject to me.

Form 3 HE Student
St. Therese College Girls JL



WHAT WILL I LEARN?

Home Economics is a subject which can be chosen as an *Optional* subject in Maltese secondary schools. Home Economics can be chosen in Year 6 as an *Optional subject* for Forms 1 and 2. Home Economics can be chosen again at the end of Form 2, as an optional subject for specialisation for Forms 3, 4 and 5.

Home Economics Lessons

Home Economics lessons are nearly always double lessons and are generally held in a Home Economics room or Food Lab.

In Forms 1 and 2, students have one double lesson (90 minutes) per week.

In Forms 3, 4 and 5, students have at least two double lessons a week (180 minutes).

Course Content

The Home Economics syllabus in secondary schools focuses on four main modules or key areas, which include:

- Food, Nutrition and Health (Module 1)
- Family Well-Being (Module 2)
- Choice and Management of Resources (Module 3)
- Coursework Component (Module 4)

Students cover these modules from Form 1 to Form 2 and from Form 3 to Form 5, gradually building on each module from year to year.

In the next sections, each module is explained in more detail.



Module 1

FOOD, NUTRITION AND HEALTH

Overview

Module 1, Food Nutrition and Health, is covered in all Forms, starting from Form 1 and ending in Form 5.

Aims

In this Module, the students will:

- Understand the importance of and develop the skills necessary to select and plan foods which promote health and well-being
- Recognise the different nutritional and dietary needs of different people in society
- Learn about the scientific principles related to food and nutrition
- Value nutritional, scientific and technological advancements in the food industry
- Effectively use hygiene and safety practices during food preparation
- Achieve the necessary practical skills to prepare foods which promote health and well-being

FOOD, NUTRITION AND HEALTH

- The Concept of Health
- The Functions of Food, the Food Groups and the Dietary Guidelines
- The CINDI Food Guide Pyramid
- The Nutrients
- The Role of Dietary Fibre in the Body
- The Importance of a Healthy Breakfast
- The Importance of Water in the Diet
- The Importance of Different Food Commodities
- The Process of Digestion
- Factors which Affect our Choice of Food
- Meal Planning for the Different Dietary Requirements
- Recipe Engineering
- Methods of Cooking
- Safety and Hygiene in the Kitchen
- Food Spoilage, Contamination and Poisoning
- Hygienic Practices in the Handling and Preparation of Food
- Organic Farming and Genetically Modified Organisms
- The Use of Convenience Food
- Food Packaging and Labelling
- Food Additives
- Preservation of Food
- Home Freezing
- The Preparation Sheet
- Weighing and Measuring
- Preparation of meals with emphasis on the basic skills, the nutrients, meal planning, food commodities and cooking methods
- The Shortcrust Pastry
- The Rubbing-in Method of Cake Making
- The All-in-One Method of Cake Making
- The Whisking Method of Cake Making
- Yeast as a Raising Agent

Source: Adapted from the Home Economics Syllabus,
Curriculum Management & E-Learning Department, Education Division, Malta



Module 2

FAMILY WELL-BEING

Overview

Module 2, Family Well-Being, is covered in all Forms, starting from Form 1 and ending in Form 5.

Aims

In this Module, the students will:

- Understand the role and different structures of families as the basic units of society
- Recognise the importance of healthy and strong family relationships
- Learn about the physical, intellectual, emotional and social needs of people at different stages of life
- Value the importance of safety inside and outside homes, schools and other places in society
- Give importance to group skills, communication skills, cooperation, freedom of expression, altruism and empathy between different members of society
- Look into the issues concerning persons with special needs and senior citizens, in the family and the community

FAMILY WELL-BEING

- The importance of the Family Unit to Society
- Different Types of Family Units
- Roles and Responsibilities of Different Family Members
- The Life Cycle of the Family
- Instilling Positive Family Relationships
- Child Care and Development
- The Physical, Intellectual, Emotional and Social Needs of Children
- Child Immunisation Programmes
- Safety In and Outside the Home
- First Aid and the First Aid Box
- The Changing Needs of Senior Citizens in Society
- Services Available for Senior Citizens
- Persons with Special Needs in the Family and the Community
- Social Help and Welfare
- Sources of Stress on Family Units and Strategies for Managing Stress
- The Identification of the Key Sources of Information and Support Provided for Families

Source: Adapted from the Home Economics Syllabus, Curriculum Management & E-Learning Department, Education Division, Malta



Module 3

CHOICE AND MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES

Overview

Module 3, Choice and Management of Resources, is covered in all Forms, starting from Form 1 and ending in Form 5.

Aims

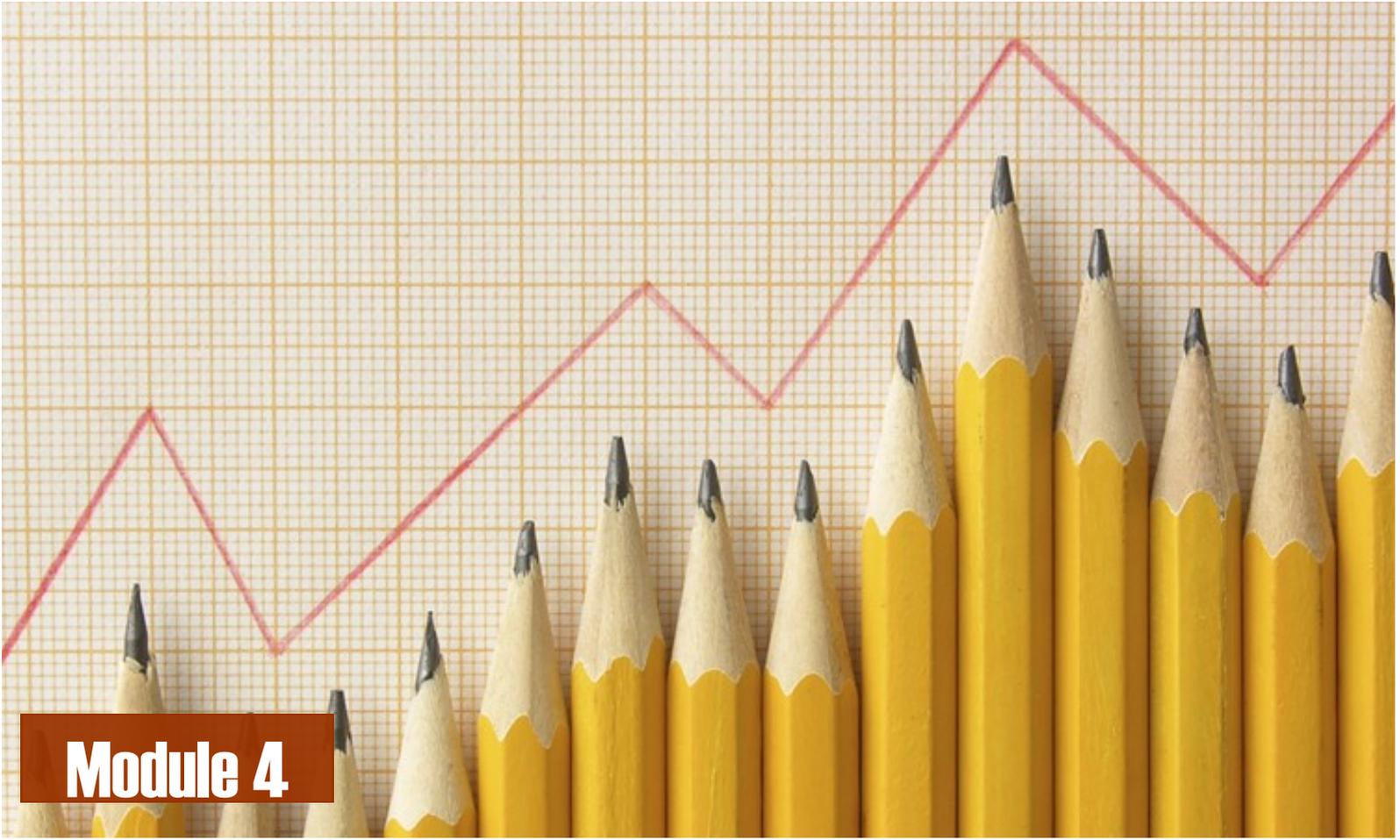
In this Module, the students will:

- Become knowledgeable on the management of personal and family-related resources
- Identify the necessary skills to be informed consumers
- Look into the different statutory and voluntary provisions available for households and families
- Recognise the importance of home management, clothing and textile care
- Understand the importance of food selection, preparation and presentation
- Learn about the importance of good personal and family care
- Identify the different uses of labour saving devices and different kitchen equipment in the home and during food preparation
- Become aware of the different ongoing concerns about the environment and develop a responsible role as 'green citizens'
- Acknowledge different ways of saving money and making a budget

CHOICE AND MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES

- Consumer Awareness
- Consumer Rights and Responsibilities
- Budgeting and Ways of Saving Money
- Shops and Shopping Practices
- Methods of Payment
- Assurances and Insurances
- Factors Influencing Choice of Home
- Kitchen Planning
- The Critical Choice of Labour Saving devices
- The Selection, Safe Use and Care of Kitchen Equipment
- The Selection, Safe Use and Care of Hobs, Grills and Ovens
- The Selection, Safe Use and Care of Refrigerators and Freezers
- Environmental Awareness
- The Choice of Goods and Services with the Minimal Impact on the Environment
- Saving Energy and Water in the Home
- Waste Separation at Source
- Appearance Management and Good Grooming
- Laundry and Fabric Care

Source: Adapted from the Home Economics Syllabus,
Curriculum Management & E-Learning Department, Education Division, Malta



Module 4

COURSEWORK COMPONENT

Overview

Module 4, the Coursework Component, is covered in all Forms, starting from Form 1 and ending in Form 5.

What is done in this Module?

The Coursework component of the Home Economics syllabus makes up 30% of the assessment scheme in all Forms and consists of:

- *Practical cooking sessions:* These sessions are aimed for students to acquire various culinary skills, as well as to practice healthy cooking methods which suit different needs and lifestyles.
- *Tasks, portfolios or investigations:* These are research and/or production of projects which make up part of the assessment.

Aims

In this Module, the students will:

- Become knowledgeable on setting aims and planning and conducting research work
- Choose the appropriate investigative techniques for the study and carry out the technique
- Experience different investigative techniques
- Complete different investigative tasks in different years of the course
- Carry out different *practical sessions* at school
- Evaluate own work and make suggestions for improvement



HOME ECONOMICS-RELATED STUDIES AND CAREERS

Home Economics is a subject which offers students access to different options for future study and work.

MCAST

Home Economics gives the necessary knowledge and skill foundations for various courses at the *Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology* (MCAST).

Such courses include:

- Diploma in Hairdressing
- Diploma for Beauty Specialists
- Diploma in Holistic Massage
- Diploma in Care
- Diploma in Facial Electrical Treatments
- Diploma in Diet and Nutrition for Complementary Therapists

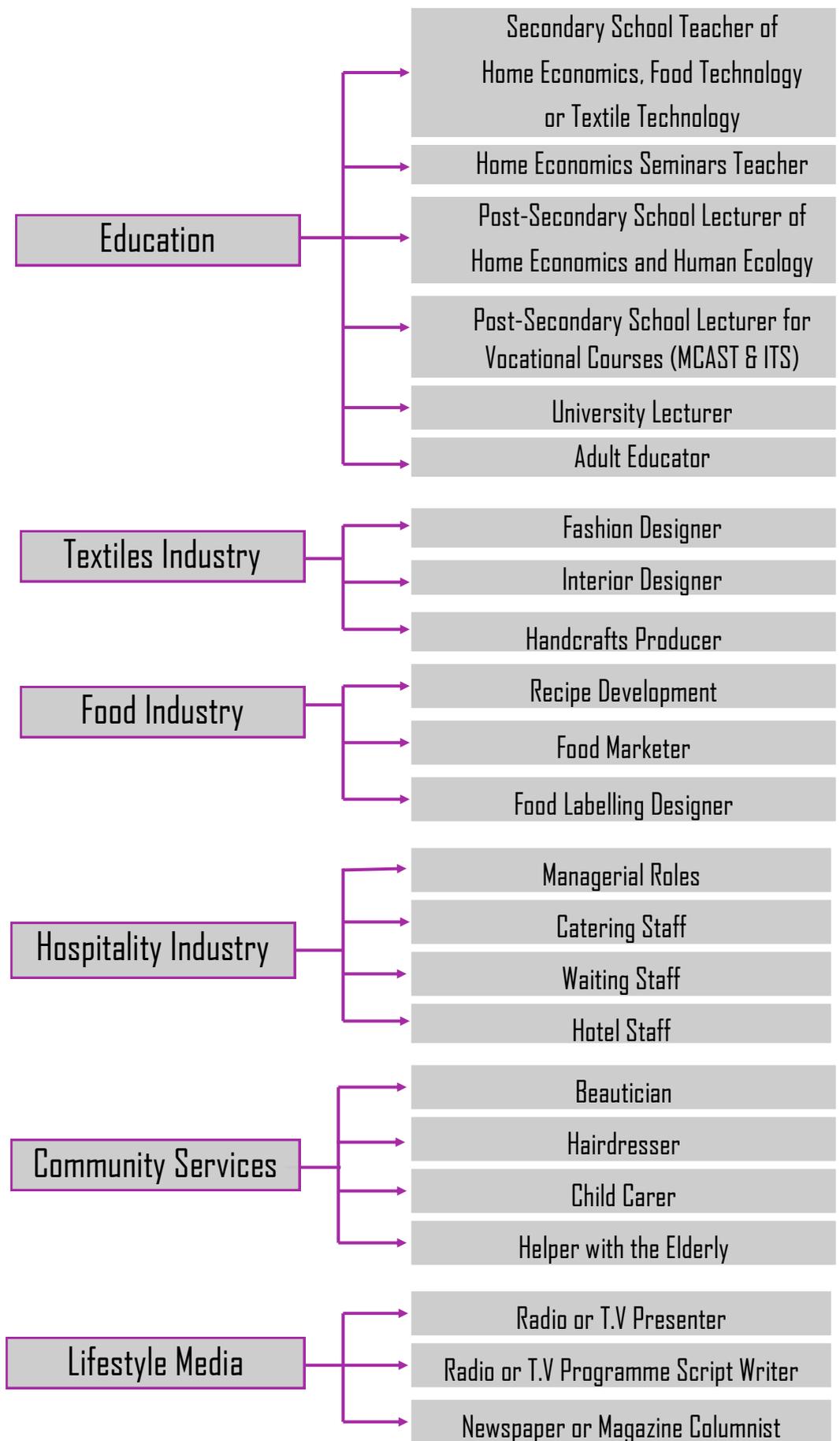
ITS

Home Economics also gives the knowledge and skill foundations for different courses at ITS. Such courses include foundation, certificate, diploma and higher diploma courses in various hospitality specialisations.

ORDINARY, INTERMEDIATE AND ADVANCED LEVEL EXAMINATION IN HOME ECONOMICS

Students who sit for the Ordinary Level Exam in Home Economics have the opportunity to continue studying Home Economics at Intermediate and Advanced Level in post-secondary schools. After Advanced Level, Home Economics studies can be furthered at University Level in a Bachelor of Education in Nutrition, Family & Consumer Studies (Honours) and later in a Master of Education in Health,

HOME ECONOMICS-RELATED STUDIES AND CAREERS





What are Home Economics lessons like?

Home Economics lessons are generally double lessons, meaning that each session is between 70 and 90 minutes. These lessons are either theory or practical lessons and often involve hands-on learning activities.

What is the purpose of practical cooking sessions in Home Economics?

Practical sessions make up part of the Practical Component from the first Module 'Food, Nutrition and Health'. Practicals are generally carried out to fulfil an assignment or brief related to different topics of the syllabus.

These practical sessions are aimed at achieving the necessary skills to 'select', 'plan', 'modify', 'prepare', 'present' and 'evaluate' choice of meals to meet the set criteria.

What is coursework?

Coursework constitutes 30% of the Home Economics syllabus at all stages from Form 1 to Form 5. In each year, coursework takes place in the form of different Practicals and Investigative Tasks. Students work independently, but they are guided by the teacher.

Is Home Economics a subject for male and female students alike?

Yes, Home Economics is available in both boys' and girls' secondary schools in both Malta and Gozo. Home Economics does not make any gender distinction and it gives both males and females the opportunity to learn and advance in the subject.

Is Home Economics a difficult subject?

The answer to this questions is very subjective. Difficulty depends on various factors. What is certain is that Home Economics is a very rich subject which offers opportunities for increasing knowledge about different topics and practising a variety of thinking and hands-on skills.

What other option subjects are best combined with Home Economics?

Home Economics is a broad subject, making it complimentary to a number of other academic subjects. Due to its science and creative base, Home Economics combines well with science subjects like Biology, as well as Social Studies and Art.

For more information about Home Economics contact the Nutrition, Family & Consumer Studies Office at the Faculty of Education, University of Malta, or HEiA on email info@heiamalta.org

