



**L-Università
ta' Malta**

International Office

University of Malta
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Student Guidelines for seeking assistance from the International Office

Preamble:

International students at university may at times experience high levels of stress. Most students successfully cope with university life, but some may become overwhelmed. When difficulties go unaddressed, the results can be serious and include academic failure and even withdrawal from the university. International students may fail to get the assistance they need for any number of reasons, including lack of knowledge about the early signs of difficulties, denial, and lack of information about campus resources that can provide help.

International students' first port of call may well be the International Office. The following are some basic guidelines to assist students in accessing the best possible service from the International Office when experiencing trying circumstances.

1. Talking about issues requires a quiet and private setting.

Depending on the situation, a place will be sought where a student can speak to a member of staff in a private manner. Students should communicate whether the chosen setting is comfortable. There are however demarcated areas where members of staff can see students on campus.

2. Communicating in a safe setting.

In certain instances, members of staff can ask the student's permission to be accompanied by another member of staff. If permission is not forthcoming from the student, then the staff member may opt to terminate the meeting and advise you on the course of action to be taken. Measures need be taken to ensure staff and student safety at all times. Students may also request to be accompanied.

3. Referrals to other services

If at any point the student's usual contact point at the International Office is not available or feels that the situation warrants the intervention of others, the student may be referred to a colleague, to a person of higher authority or other professional service, unit or entity that can assist in the circumstances.

Students are regularly referred to the Counselling Unit, which is composed of a team of professionals who have the necessary expertise and capacity to handle such circumstances. The Counselling Unit at the University has long-term experience in assisting international students at the University. The need to refer students to the Counselling Unit is especially felt when the student's distress is affecting his/her usual day to day activities, and/or in cases where professional counselling is the best way forward.

4. What if you do not wish to be referred?

If a student does not wish to be referred, as he or she may not wish to divulge his or her situation to another member of staff or the Counselling Unit (see point 5) the student's decision will be respected. The advice and recommendations that are provided to students are based on internal guidelines drawn up to ensure the welfare and wellbeing of international students at the University of Malta. However, if the situation is deemed to be reasonably serious and/or where a student could consider self-harm or there is the risk of harming others then other steps would have to be taken.

5. Confidentiality and limits thereof

Members of staff of the University of Malta are duty-bound to secure confidentiality and not disclose information without prior authorization.

Students will be verbally informed at the very first encounter with the International and EU office about **the limits of confidentiality and that confidentiality cannot be maintained in cases where there is a risk of the student harming oneself or others**. In such cases the student may need to be referred immediately to the Counselling Unit. The telephone call will be made either in front of the student, or if the student is absent, the student will be informed of the referral.

Once the referral has been made, however, attendance for counselling on the part of the student is not mandatory and failure to attend will not jeopardise the student's registration at the University. The Counselling Unit **will not** disclose information as to whether the student is attending sessions.

Should the situation escalate, a consultative ad hoc committee constituted of the Rector's Delegate for International Student Welfare as Chair, the Director of the International Office, Representatives from the Faculty and/or other stakeholders relevant to the case, will be called up and will decide whether a report to the Home University should be prepared.

6. Cases of emergency

In cases of emergency where the student is at **immediate risk of harming oneself or others**, the Counselling Unit would need to be contacted for professional psychological advice, and the emergency number 112 dialled, which gives access to the ambulance, fire brigade and police. In such cases the parents, guardians, sponsors, medical practitioner and family members may need to be contacted. The police at the Msida Police Station will also be informed of the details of the emergency as their presence might be required.

7. Experience of victimisation

If a student thinks that she or he may have been the victim of a crime he or she may wish to discuss this with the International Office staff who will guide and assist you in contacting the police. You are not obliged to report this to the International Office and may contact the police directly, especially if the matter happens outside office hours. However, do approach the International Office so that we may be in a position to assist you where possible.

8. Students who are minors

In the case of students who are minors (under eighteen), members of staff are obliged to inform parents or guardians of the student's situation and accompanying distress. You will be advised that your parent(s) or guardian(s) are going to be informed of the situation.

Contacts relating to student support at the International Office:	
<p>Exchange/Visiting students Monique Mallia In her absence: Annhelica Agius/Stefania Agius Fabri</p> <p>Monique Mallia: Tel: 2340 2370 Email: <i>monique.mallia@um.edu.mt</i></p> <p>Annhelica Agius: Tel: 23402204 Email: <i>annhelica.agius@um.edu.mt</i></p> <p>Stefania Agius Fabri: Tel: 23403182 Email: <i>stefania.agius-fabri@um.edu.mt</i></p>	<p>Erasmus incoming students Annhelica Agius/Rachel Abdilla</p> <p>Annhelica Agius: Tel: 23402204 Email: <i>annhelica.agius@um.edu.mt</i></p> <p>Rachel Abdilla: Tel: 23403708 Email: <i>rachel.abdilla@um.edu.mt</i></p>
<p>International students Elizabeth Borg Cardona In her absence: Stefania Agius Fabri</p> <p>Elizabeth Borg Cardona: Tel: 23403986 Email: <i>international@um.edu.mt</i></p> <p>Stefania Agius Fabri: Tel: 23403182 Email: <i>stefania.agius-fabri@um.edu.mt</i></p>	<p>Chinese students Lucy Hart In her absence: Stefania Agius Fabri</p> <p>Lucy Hart: Tel: 23403749 Email: <i>lucy.hart@um.edu.mt</i></p> <p>Stefania Agius Fabri: Tel: 23403182 Email: <i>stefania.agius-fabri@um.edu.mt</i></p>
<p>Kuwaiti/Omani/Saudi students Carol Zammit In her absence: Elaine Zammit/Mohammed Hazzouri</p> <p>Carol Zammit Tel: 2340 3180 Email: <i>carol.zammit@um.edu.mt</i></p> <p>Elaine Zammit: Tel: 23403376 Email: <i>elaine.zammit@um.edu.mt</i></p> <p>Mohammed Hazzouri: Tel: 23402808 Email: <i>mohammed.hazzouri@um.edu.mt</i></p>	

Student services on campus:

Counselling Services:
um.edu.mt/counselling

National Services (off campus):

Title of Organisation	Type of Service	Tel
Emergency	Ambulance, Fire, Police	112
Support line	Supportline 179 is the national helpline offering support, information about local social welfare services and other agencies, and a referral service to callers who require support. It is also a national service to people who are in times of difficulty or crisis. The primary mission of the Supportline 179 service is to provide, immediate and unbiased help to those seeking information, support and/or require a referral to social service agencies.	179
Malta Police Force		2122 4001 - 7
Mater Dei Hospital	Mater Dei Hospital is a general teaching hospital offering a full range of hospital services. It also provides an extensive range of specialist services.	2545 0000
Appogg	Aġenzija Appoġġ, as the National Agency for children, families and the community, safeguards and promotes the well-being of these persons through the development and provision of psycho-social welfare services. http://www.fsww.gov.mt/en/appogg/Pages/overview-appogg.aspx	2295 9000
Sedqa	Sedqa is a national service mandated to plan and recommend developments and updates to the National Policy in the field of drug and alcohol abuse and compulsive gambling, and to provide service in health promotion, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation to persons with drug and/or alcohol problems and other similar conditions, and to their families, so as to help them live a stable life and to integrate better in society. http://www.fsww.gov.mt/en/sedqa/Pages/overview-sedqa.aspx	23885110
Caritas	Full description of services available at: http://www.caritasmalta.org/?m=services	25906600
Mount Carmel Hospital	Mount Carmel Hospital aims to promote mental health by assisting persons with mental health problems who require specialist treatment and care, as well as providing support for their social network. It provides, through specialist multi-disciplinary teams, a comprehensive and integrated range of community and hospital mental health services.	2141 5183 or 2330 4301/4023
Psychiatric Unit (Mater Dei Hospital)		2545 6920/1
GU (Genitourinary Clinic) at Mater Dei Hospital	Diagnosis and treatment of Sexually Transmitted Infections - Counselling and testing for HIV and other genital conditions not necessarily sexually acquired	22987115
Mental health clinics	Floriana Health Centre	21220454