

Further Education

Policy on the Use of Additional Languages of Instruction for Accredited Programmes

1. Purpose

This policy establishes a structured regulatory framework governing the use of languages of instruction other than Maltese and English in accredited Further Education programmes (MQF Levels 1–4).

This policy aims to:

- Support the internationalisation and accessibility of education provision.
- Safeguard academic standards and learner protection.
- Ensure comparability, transparency, and quality assurance across all accredited provision.

2. Legal Status

In accordance with its statutory quality assurance functions, the Authority shall regulate language of instruction to safeguard quality assurance, learner protection, and qualification comparability.

This policy constitutes an amendment and supplement to MFHEA (henceforth the Authority) Programme Accreditation.

Compliance with this policy is mandatory for all licensed providers seeking to deliver accredited programmes in languages other than Maltese or English.

Additional languages of instruction may include languages commonly used within the European Union.

Where a provider seeks approval to deliver an accredited programme in a language not widely used within the European Union, the provider shall submit a clear justification demonstrating that the request addresses a legitimate educational or societal need within the Maltese context and serves the public interest.

3. Scope

Applies to Further Education homegrown programmes (MQF Levels 1–4), including full programmes and awards (micro-credentials) delivered in additional languages. This policy does not apply to programmes where the primary objective is the teaching of the language itself.

Delivery through online learning modalities must remain within the scope of accredited delivery arrangements.

4. Core Regulatory Principles

The Authority shall assess each request for the use of an additional language of instruction on a case-by-case basis. The Authority will consider whether the proposed language supports effective teaching and learning and whether its use is appropriate to the programme's educational context.

Particular attention will be given to ensuring that the introduction of an additional language does not unintentionally limit student inclusion by restricting learners to instruction solely in their native or regional language.

The Authority will also consider the disciplinary suitability of translating the programme, particularly in vocational or technical fields where specialised terminology may make translation impractical or pedagogically inappropriate.

All programmes must first be accredited in Maltese or English. The Maltese or English language version must remain operationally deliverable, adequately staffed, and supported by sufficient learning resources throughout the accreditation cycle.

Providers shall not advertise, market, enrol learners, or commence delivery in an additional language prior to formal approval by the Authority and the Malta Qualifications Registry publication.

Approval of an additional language authorises a delivery variant of the accredited programme and does not constitute approval of a separate programme.

5. Baseline Accreditation Language

The institution shall submit a programme application for every additional language to further.education@mfhea.mt

The required information in the programme application for the additional language for instruction shall be translated in the additional language being requested.

In particular, translations must demonstrate:

- equivalence of learning outcomes
- correct MQF terminology
- accurate assessment language
- learner experience must remain equivalent.

The institution shall demonstrate via a formal written declaration that both the application and programme have been translated by a certified translator. The declaration shall include:

- translator name and credentials
- signed declaration of accuracy
- contact details for verification

The translator shall be a graduate in translation, linguistics, or the target language **OR** a sworn/authorised translator in an EU/EEA jurisdiction.

The Authority retains the right to ask for further documentation and verification.

6. Further Education Requirements

6.1. Application

Additional languages may be requested during initial or through a later application.

6.2. Accreditation Process

Additional language versions shall:

- Requests shall be approved by the relevant Quality Assurance Committee
- Be translated by a certified translator as per number 4 above
- The Authority's verification may include full or sample-based linguistic and academic equivalence review and assessment of alignment with accredited English documentation.

Therefore, approval of delivery in an additional language shall be contingent upon the Authority's ability to secure appropriate linguistic or subject-matter expertise necessary to conduct accreditation, monitoring, and quality assurance activities.

6.3. Fees

Every additional language is subject to an additional fee of €250, both if applications are submitted during initial accreditation or through a later application.

7. Staffing and Language Competence

Providers must demonstrate that:

- In addition to the usual teaching staff requirements:
(Academic courses pegged at MQF Levels 1 – 4 require tutors who are qualified at least with a relevant degree or equivalent at MQF Level 6, and Vocational courses at MQF Levels 1 – 4 require tutors who are qualified at least with a relevant full qualification at Level 5).
- Teaching staff delivering programmes in additional languages shall also possess:
 - Minimum CEFR Level C1 proficiency or equivalent.

- Students enrolling in programmes delivered in additional languages possess:
 - Minimum CEFR Level B2 proficiency or equivalent.

The Authority reserves the right to request evidence of language proficiency at any stage.

Documented language admission verification procedures are subject for review during a compliance check and/or programme audit.

8. Learning Resources and Programme Delivery

Providers delivering programmes in approved additional languages must ensure that the programme can be fully delivered and completed in the approved language of instruction. In particular, providers shall ensure that:

- All the information on the institution's website is also available in the additional language of instruction.
- The language of instruction is clearly communicated to prospective students prior to enrolment, and that students possess the necessary language proficiency to successfully follow the programme.
- Core learning resources and reading materials are available in the language of instruction, without reliance on Maltese or English language materials unless explicitly approved by the Authority.
- The programme is delivered in the language of instruction declared during the accreditation process. Teaching, assessment, and student communication must be conducted in this language.
- Any translated versions of programme documentation, including course descriptions, learning outcomes, and other key programme elements, accurately reflect and remain fully aligned with the version approved during the programme accreditation process.
- Advertising or promotional materials related to the programme are consistent with the approved language version.

9. Approved Language Versions on the Malta Qualifications Registry

The Authority shall record all approved additional language versions of accredited programmes within the official Malta Qualifications Registry.

The registry shall clearly specify:

- The accredited Maltese or English language version
- Approved additional language(s) of delivery and relative title translation
- Accreditation status and validity period when applicable
- Any specific approval conditions where applicable

10. Transitional Arrangements

Programmes previously approved by the Authority for delivery in languages other than Maltese or English shall remain valid.

Once that programme cyclical reviews (reaccreditation) are initiated, providers offering such programmes shall be required to demonstrate compliance with the provisions of this policy.

The Authority may also request demonstrated compliance and further documentation at any time during programme delivery where necessary to verify continued compliance with quality assurance, learner protection, and equivalence requirements under this policy.

11. Withdrawal or Suspension of Language Approval

11.1. Grounds for Withdrawal

The Authority may suspend or withdraw approval for delivery in an additional language where:

- Required language quality assurance mechanisms are not maintained.
- Learner protection measures are compromised.
- the programme in an additional language of instruction is not compliant with the new programme standards for further education (upon implementation).

11.2. Learner Protection Measures

Where language approval is withdrawn:

- Providers shall ensure programme completion arrangements for affected learners in the approved language where feasible.
- Transfer to Maltese or English delivery may occur only where appropriate.
- The Authority retains discretion, exercised proportionately and with due regard to learner protection and academic continuity.

Withdrawal of language approval does not automatically revoke programme accreditation in Maltese or English. Responsibility for learner protection and associated costs remain with the licensed provider.

12. Appeals

Providers may appeal decisions related to language approval through the existing appeals mechanism for further education. The appeal shall be based on whether the additional language shall be refused or accepted.

13. Validity

Approval for delivery in additional languages shall align with the programme it applies to once that programme cyclical reviews (reaccreditation) are implemented.

14. Entry into Force

This policy shall enter into force from the date of publication.

This policy supersedes MFHEA Circular 10/2025 titled *“Policy update on language of instruction”* and replaces any previous restrictions relating to the approval of additional languages of instruction.

All applications submitted following the entry into force of this policy shall be assessed in accordance with its provisions.