In line with Government policy for more curricular flexibility in the Primary, that will allow teachers the freedom to choose their preferred pedagogy as long as the set learning outcomes are met, the Curriculum Management and eLearning Department (CMeLD) is piloting a project whereby Social Studies in the Primary sector will become a key vehicle for the introduction of this curricular flexibility.

This piloting will take place in Year 5 throughout state primary schools, during scholastic year 2013-14. This piloting is not taking place in Year 4 since it was felt that Year 4 teachers need to continue focussing on the implementation of the Statutory Action Plans.

A. Syllabus

The Year 5 SSAR will be based on the present Year 5 Social Studies syllabus as found at: www.curriculum.gov.mt. The syllabus shall be divided as follows:

- **core content.** This will constitute about 50% of the present syllabus; CMeLD will identify the relevant learning outcomes and schools will be expected to cover the core content by the end of the scholastic year. The End-of-Year written exam, provided by the Educational Assessment Unit (EAU), will be based entirely on this core content;
- **syllabus-based elective content.** From the rest of the syllabus content (c.a. 50% of the total) there shall be a menu from which schools will be expected to choose and cover at least two thirds of the elective learning outcomes;
- **school-based elective content.** This new procedure means that schools can exercise complete freedom with the remaining one sixth of the syllabus, which translates to about 6 weeks of Social Studies lessons. Furthermore, they can exercise this freedom in a differentiated way. Schools may thus choose one or a combination of the following for all or some of their Year 5 learners:
  - use this time for consolidation in other learning areas;
  - cover the remaining part of the Social Studies syllabus;
  - develop and deliver new Social Studies topic/s, for example topics that are more directly related to the school community and environment.
In making these choices, schools need to consider the different needs of all students, including both students with basic skills needs as well as gifted and talented students.

As regards the elective content, using forms provided by CMeLD, schools shall present their proposal of what they intend to cover to the College Principal, who shall formally endorse. The Education Officer for Social Studies (Primary) shall act as curriculum advisor to the College Principals if so requested.

B. Assessment

Assessment will be as follows:
- The sequence of core and elective content throughout the scholastic year is determined by the school;
- The Mid-Year written examination will continue to be college-based but on an 80 marks basis, covering the learning during the first semester (September 2013 – January 2014);
- The Annual examination will continue to be EAU-based but on 80 marks basis, covering the core content of the syllabus.
- Throughout the year, a project as well as a fieldwork exercise will be undertaken; the fieldwork and the project will each be assessed by the class teacher as part of the normal class-based assessment, each on a 20-mark basis.
- The mark scored for the fieldwork exercise (out of a maximum of 20) will feature in the Mid-Year report while the mark scored for the project (also out of a maximum of 20) will feature as part of the End-of-Year school report.

Arrangements which shall be coordinated by D-CMeL will be made whereby these marks can be inputted into the eLearning Platform for 2013-14.

C. Project and Fieldwork

The Project shall be selected from a list of topics that constitute 1/3 of all the topics in the Year 5 syllabus. This list is changed from year to year, so that all the topics are addressed in a three-year cycle. This yearly list is determined by CMeLD and will be communicated to schools by the end of May 2013.

As part of this SSAR all Year 5 classes will be expected to undertake a fieldwork trip to at least one of the following locations:
- l-Imdina
- il-Birgu
- iċ-Ċittadella

A set of work directives (fieldwork notes), designed by CMeLD, and trialled and evaluated by Year 5 teachers, will be made available online by the end of May 2013 for use by Year 5 classes during this fieldwork exercise.

D. Support for Implementation

The Project and Fieldwork components are based on successful pilots led by Mr Tony Pace EO for Social Studies (Primary). Mr Pace shall be visiting all primary schools during the third term so as to support every Year 5 teacher in the implementation of this reorganisation.

A meeting will be held for Heads of Primary Schools during which this new procedure will be explained further. The date of the meeting will be communicated later on.
Supporting documents as well as assessment criteria for the project and fieldwork exercises can be found on A HANDBOOK FOR SSAR – available online (FRONTER) at EOs’ Subject Rooms – Social Studies Primary.

Any queries and/or requests for support in the implementation of SSAR are to be addressed to: tony.pace.2@ilearn.edu.mt (tel: 2598 2906).

Thank you for your collaboration.

Sandro Spiteri  
Director  
Curriculum Management and eLearning