

SOCIAL **S**TUDIES

Primary

a handbook

Years One to Six

**Direttorat
għall-Kwalità u Standards
fl-Edukazzjoni
Floriana VLT 2000
Malta**



**Directorate
For Quality and Standards
In Education
Floriana VLT 2000
Malta**

This handbook was compiled
by Tony Pace EO (Primary)

This online resource is to be regarded as work-in-progress and will be updated as necessary as we collectively build up our local experience in the implementation process.

It is managed by Mr Tony Pace and updates will be available at:
(Fronter) EOs' Subject Rooms – Social Studies Primary

Gaetano Bugeja
Director CMD
June 2014

SOCIAL STUDIES PRIMARY

2014

1 rationale and background

- (a) The Curriculum Management Department (CMD) has embarked on an exercise which will see the content of primary syllabi revised and reduced as from the beginning of scholastic year 2014-15. This handbook contains the CMD's new policies for Social Studies Primary; *revision and reduction of SS primary syllabi*
- (b) This document is guided by a number of factors, which factors include SSAR and NCF feedback. SSAR (Social Studies Assessment Reorganization) was successfully piloted in all Year Five state school classes during scholastic year 2013-14. Feedback received from Year Five teachers was mainly positive (see results of questionnaire administered to Year Five teachers at: <http://primarysocialstudies.skola.edu.mt/?p=2397>); *successful piloting of SSAR*
- (c) This revision of the Social Studies primary syllabus is also addressing, among other issues, the need for Social Studies to assert itself in a fresh and new dimension. This need has long been felt; it is time for Social Studies to move out of the classroom and be supported by projects and fieldwork trips that should make the discipline more attractive and relevant to modern day students; *fieldwork trips and projects*
- (d) The present exercise is also taking into account feedback received during NCF consultations, which feedback calls for more curricular flexibility in the primary. In response to these calls for more curricular flexibility, which includes the freedom for teachers to choose their preferred pedagogy as long as the set learning outcomes are met, Social Studies in the Primary shall become a key vehicle for the piloting of flexibility in our primary schools; *NCF feedback*
- (e) The new methods of assessment being suggested are intended to work in favour of more curricular devolution to schools in a controlled and supportive way. *curricular devolution*

2 the syllabi

The syllabus content to be covered as from September 2014 will be divided as follows: *the syllabi*

- (a) **core content.** Teaching Blocks (Units of teaching) indicated as 'core' were identified by CMD and schools will be expected to cover the core content by the end of the scholastic year. In the case of Years 4, 5 and 6, the End-of-Year written exam, provided by the EAU, *core content*

will be based solely and entirely on this core content.

(b) **elective content.** From a given list of at least six teaching blocks schools will be expected to choose and cover at least **three**.

*elective
content*

There are no formal assessments in Year Three. Teachers will cover the three teaching blocks identified as 'core' and choose any other three teaching blocks from the remaining six constituting the 'elective' content.

Year Three

Years One and Two are encouraged to cover the entire suggested content.

*Years One and
Two*

3 fieldwork

A minimum of one fieldwork exercise will be carried out by every primary school class from Year Three to Year Six between October 2014 and the end of January 2015.

fieldwork

A set of work directives (fieldwork notes) will be made available by CMD; the work directives will be distributed to all schools by the end of September 2014.

work directives

Short video clips will also be made available on You Tube so that teachers and students would familiarise themselves with the suggested route that the fieldwork trip should follow.

video clips

The fieldwork exercise should be completed by the end of January 2015. It will be assessed by the respective class teachers using the following criteria:

*assessment
criteria*

		Marks Max: 20
a	Participation and ability to follow instructions	5
b	Observation, identification, recording	5
c	Interpretation of information collected	5
d	final presentation of fieldwork document	5
	TOTAL	20

*fieldwork
assessment
criteria*

If a student is absent on the day when the fieldwork trip is undertaken, the teacher may decide, after consultation with the parents, to allow the learner to carry out the fieldwork exercise with an adult person. Alternatively the learner will be requested to undertake another (extra) project from the year's list of projects. The fieldwork will be assessed out of a maximum of 20 marks and marks scored will be recorded in the Mid-Year report sent by each school.

*absent
students*

4 the last term: either a PROJECT or another FIELDWORK TRIP

During the last term teachers in charge of year 4, 5 and 6 classes can choose **one** of the following to form part of their students' Annual Social Studies assessment:

another fieldwork or project

(Either):

- (a) A second fieldwork trip (or)
- (b) a project

Work directives (fieldwork notes) in connection with the (optional) second fieldwork will be made available online and schools can download and print their own copies.

the second (optional) fieldwork

Students opting in favour of the Project will select a title from a list of topics that constitute 1/2 of all the topics in the respective year list. Projects should be completed by students and assessed by their teacher by the 15th of May. The Projects' list will change from year to year so that all the topics are addressed in a two-year cycle. This yearly list will be determined by CMD and communicated to schools by the end of June of each scholastic year.

list of topics for the project

Fieldworks and Projects will be assessed by class teachers out of a maximum of 20 marks; in the case of projects, these shall be assessed following these guidelines:

assessment of project

Marks	Quality of work
17 – 20	Excellent; evidence (<i>photographs, pictures, drawings, information</i>) is ample and of different forms. It is all relevant to the project. Presentation (<i>introduction to the project, main items, conclusion</i>) has very good structure.
13 – 16	Very Good; evidence is sufficient and relevant to explain project. Presentation has a good structure.
9 – 12	Good; evidence is sufficient and relevant to explain the project. Presentation has a weak structure but the main points are present.
5 – 8	Fair; evidence is limited and most of it is relevant to the project. Presentation lacks structure but a few main points are present.
0 – 4	Poor; evidence is very limited and most of it is not relevant to the project. Presentation lacks structure.

Marks scored for the second fieldwork or the project will be recorded in the End-of-Year report sent by each school.

5 assessment

Assessment/s will be as follows:

- 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 2014 – January 2015); *mid-year assessment/s*
- The Annual examination will continue to be EAU-based but on 80 marks basis, covering the core content of the syllabus. *end-of-year assessment*
- Throughout the year, two fieldworks or a fieldwork and a project will be undertaken; these 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 first (compulsory) fieldwork exercise (out of a maximum of 20) will feature in the Mid-Year report while the mark scored for either the fieldwork or the project (also out of a maximum of 20) will feature as part of the End-of-Year school report.

7 reduction of Social Studies content

Through this revision the teaching content of the Social Studies syllabi is being reduced as follows: *reductions*

Year One – 50% (c.a)

Year Two – 50% (c.a)

Year Three – 10% (c.a)

Year Four – 25% (c.a)

Year Five – 20% (c.a)

Year Six – no significant change in amount/s

8 support

The EO Social Studies (Primary) will provide support to College Principals, SMTs and Primary School teachers, so that all aspects of this change are understood and implemented effectively. *support*

All relevant documents that can support the implementation of this reorganization will be available at:

- FRONTER – EO's SUBJECT ROOMS – SOCIAL STUDIES PRIMARY
- <http://primarysocialstudies.skola.edu.mt>