

REGULATIONS FOR THE EN TO SN CONVERSION COURSE

REGULATIONS, 2008

1. Citation and Interpretation

1. These regulations may be cited as the EN to SN Conversion Course Regulations, 2008.
2. In these regulations, unless the context otherwise requires:
 - a. **The Board** means the Board of Studies.
 - b. **The course** means the EN to SN conversion course.
 - c. **The module** means a study unit which may be made up of a contribution of lectures, seminars, tutorials, and private study to which one or more credits shall be assigned; one credit study unit shall require approximately 50 hours of study, of which 16 shall normally be student/staff contact.

2. Course Structure

1. The course shall normally extend over a period of 16 months and shall be divided into 3 semesters, which will allow the teaching of 13 modules equivalent to 120 ECTS credits.
2. Students are required to complete all 13 modules and all clinical placements in order for them to become certified.
3. An 80% attendance in each module is essential for successful completion of the course.
4. The 13 modules are divided as follows:

a. Semester 1

Study Skills	3 ECTS
Professional Development	4 ECTS
Mental Health	3 ECTS
Clinical Skills	4 ECTS
Medical & Surgical update	5 ECTS
Primary Health Care	3 ECTS
Gerontology	2 ECTS

b	Semester 2	
	Professional Development	4 ECTS
	Mental Health	2 ECTS
	Clinical Skills	4 ECTS
	Medical & Surgical	3 ECTS
	Research	3 ECTS
	Community Health Care	2 ECTS
	Management	2 ECTS
	Acute Care	4 ECTS
c.	Semester 3	
	Management	3 ECTS
	Mother and Child	3 ECTS
	Paediatrics	2 ECTS

3. Assessment and Progress

1. Grades for credits shall be awarded on the basis of the students' performance in coursework, assignments and presentations, as deemed appropriate by the subject coordinator, subject to approval by the Board.
2. There shall be an Examination Board which will monitor all assessments performed by the subject coordinators and which will set relevant examination papers for the final examinations.
3. Credits shall be assigned according to the following grades in descending order of merit: A+, A, B+, B, C+, C, D+, D. F indicates fail.
4. Students who fail a test may be re-assessed in that study unit once only. In the re-assessment, the maximum grade, which may be awarded, shall be grade D. Only in the finals students are allowed three attempts should they fail from the final comprehensive examinations.
5. In order to proceed from the first semester to the second semester, a student must have obtained all the credits outlined in that semester. This applies also for passing to the third semester and ultimately to the final examinations.

4. Clinical Placements

1. During the course, students have to attend compulsory clinical placements. Such placements should take place as follows:

a	Medical	2 weeks (86 hrs)
b	Surgical	2 weeks (86 hrs)
c	Geriatric	2 weeks (86 hrs)
d	Community Care	2 weeks (86 hrs)
e	Maternity	2 weeks (86 hrs)
f	Psychiatry	2 weeks (86 hrs)

2. During their clinical placements, students will be supervised by their appointed preceptor in order to cover the clinical objectives indicated in the preceptor booklet.
3. In the event that, for no valid reasons, students do not complete 80% of the stipulated time in each and every indicated clinical area, they will be considered as failed. This accounts also for sick leave. In such circumstances arrangements with the course coordinator should be made so that the amount of missing clinical practice by the student in that particular area are covered. If such outcome is still not achieved, procedures as per regulation 3 para 4 and 5 are to be implemented.

5. Drop-outs

1. Students who drop from the course for no valid reason as deemed by the Board will not be allowed to apply again for the immediate forthcoming course. The decision of the Board in such circumstances is final.
2. If it is deemed by the Board that there is enough circumstantial evidence for students to drop out from the course, they are allowed the opportunity to continue the course along with the next course intake. This concession however will be limited to the first four student dropouts.
3. In the case where more than four students present valid reasons to drop out from the course and who formally apply to be re-instated in future courses, the next four students from the fifth drop-out will be allowed to continue the course along with the second forthcoming course intake.

4. If it is foreseen that through the para 3 of this regulation the total number of candidates will exceed quantity 40 students per course, the Board will decide what group intake a drop out student will commence.
5. In the event that all course intakes, due to excessive drop-outs, become saturated with 40 students per course, the Board will meet to decide whether extra drop-out students should continue in their studies in the forthcoming courses or not. The decision of the Board in such circumstances is final.
6. Students who drop from a course will have their original registration fee valid for a future course only if they write to the board within one month from the date of drop out, stating the year they intend to pursue such course, which should be within a period of two years. Students will be allowed only one chance to take this option if courses are still being run.

6. Results and Certification

1. The certificate shall be awarded to candidates who have:
 - a obtained all credits throughout the course
 - b successfully completed all the clinical placements indicated as compulsory by the Board, and
 - c successfully passed from the written component of the final examinations.

7. Course Fees

- 1 All Maltese and EU applicants working in the public sector will be asked to pay a non-refundable sum of €116.50.
- 2 Nurses from the private sector, non-EU nurses working in the public sector, and nurses who are not in employment, wishing to take the conversion course will be able to do so against a payment of €582.00.

8. Admission Criteria

1. 36 students will be allowed for each course intake.
2. In each intake, there will be a mixture of nurses from all sectors, public and private, in the ratios according to number of applicants from each area.
3. In the event that the number of applicants exceeds the required number of posts required for each course, selection of candidates will be done based on the number of years of clinical experience and on the exigencies of the service. A selection board shall be appointed to classify applicants.

3.1 Candidates from previous courses who had completed the course and failed in obtaining their qualification will be allowed to pursue the forthcoming courses. This decision is being adopted not as an exception but as a continuation of the previous courses.

3.2 Applicants who might arrive to retiring age before their chance to be selected for the coming courses will be considered to pursue earlier courses according to their age.

4. Selected candidates will be informed by post and the relevant course fees according to regulation 7 will apply. Candidates refusing to pursue the course before it commences, will fall last in the waiting list and will be accepted to pursue such courses only if the courses are still running.

9. Procedure To Be Followed When A Student Is Having Difficulty In Achieving Required Academic And/Or Clinical Standards

Following the identification of a problem related to theory or practice by any appropriate member of the teaching/clinical team, the following sequence of events will occur.

1. The problem will be discussed with the student by an appropriate member of the teaching/clinical team.

The Course Coordinator should be informed of the problem and the discussion that has occurred. This and all further action must be recorded in the student's personal file. The Board of Studies will be informed.

2. A meeting must be convened between the Course Coordinator and student within a week of the problem being identified at which a remedial contract will be jointly agreed. The student will have the option of having a representative present at this meeting and at any other stage of the procedure.

Remedial contracts will be written, agreed, signed and then evaluated within a negotiated period. It should be specific and include information such as outcomes and time span for the programme, methods to be utilized, people involved and intermediate stages if appropriate.

A copy of the contract must be retained on file, a second copy given to the student. It is the responsibility of the Course Coordinator in conjunction with the student to ensure the contract is implemented.

A further meeting will be held at the agreed time to review the contract outcomes.

3. Achievement and satisfactory progress enable continuation of the course.

Non-achievement of the outcomes by the agreed date will lead to discontinuation of the course.

NOTES

- (i) Students have the right to appeal, in relation to the conduct of an assessment/examination, to the Examination Board. This appeal must be in writing within 7 days of the receipt of the report/date of the assessment/examination.
- (ii) Following the decision of the Examination Board, students have the right to appeal against the decision to the Board of Studies. This appeal must be in writing within 21 days of the receipt of the result of the initial appeal.

10. PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED IN THE EVENT OF SICKNESS / ABSENCE

These notes are written with the intention of enabling teaching staff to provide the appropriate support/guidance needed by students in relation to absence caused by sickness.

- 1 Course/Subject coordinators have overall responsibility for monitoring sickness/absence and for informing students of the appropriate employer policies.
- 2 All sickness must be reported as soon as possible to the Course/Subject Coordinator and appropriate personnel in the clinical area.
- 3 In relation to students who are seconded to the course within the Department of Health from the private sector, the responsibility for notifying the employing authority lies jointly with the student and the Course/Subject Coordinator.
- 4 The student is advised to keep a record of the time the contact was made and with whom (by name) when reporting sick.
- 5 It is the individual students and Course/Subject coordinators responsibility to maintain accurate records of sickness/absence, and all students should be advised accordingly.
- 6 In the event of sickness, maternity or compassionate leave, individuals may be granted an extension to enable them to achieve the learning outcomes. This will be negotiated between the Course/Subject coordinator, the Board of Studies, the Student and the Employing Authority.
- 7 The Course/Subject Coordinator following any period of unauthorized absence will formally see students.
- 8 All actions should be documented, signed and dated.

11. CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

Students are encouraged to read widely and to quote and acknowledge sources correctly when producing formative or summative pieces of work

Cheating and plagiarism are not acceptable. To present, the borrowed thoughts from the work of others as the student's own will render the student liable to incur penalties as determined by the Academic Board.

PROCEDURE

- 1 When a marker or invigilator suspects cheating/plagiarism, he/she will investigate and notify the Course Coordinator via a detailed written report.
- 2 The collated evidence will be examined by the Course Coordinator who will then call a meeting, normally within 7 days of receipt of the report, to discuss the allegation with the student, and where relevant the intake teacher or personal tutor.
- 3 In cases where the Course Coordinator considers that the allegation may be substantiated, a disciplinary hearing will be arranged, normally within 7 days of the investigatory meeting. The student will be given 3 days notice of the date and venue for the hearing which will be chaired by a member of the Board of Studies. The hearing will be conducted in accordance with appropriate disciplinary/conduct procedure.
- 4 The assessment result will be withheld pending the outcome of the investigation/hearing.
- 5 A full report of all investigated cases must be sent to the Examination Board, regardless of whether the allegation is deemed substantiated or otherwise.
- 6 In the case of all reported incidents, the Examination Board shall make the final decision regarding the assessment result to be awarded. If the Examination Board is not scheduled to meet within FOUR weeks of the result of the investigatory hearing, the Chair of the Board shall establish a sub-group with the power to take action on behalf of the board. A full report will then be presented to the next meeting of the Examination Board.
- 7 Cases where the allegation is established, regardless of severity, will be reported to the Chair of the Board of Studies. A final decision by the Board of Studies is taken after legal advice is sought.

- 8 Appeals against any disciplinary action must be made in accordance with the disciplinary/conduct procedure.
- 9 When evidence of cheating/plagiarism becomes available subsequent to the publication of assessment results or recommendation of the Board of Study following an investigated incident, a full investigation may be carried out and a (further) disciplinary hearing may be convened. Action as in note 6 will then be followed.

NOTE

Documented cases will provide the basis for a body of case histories that will be available for future consultation by guidance staff.

The above regulations are subject for revision periodically. These regulations annul and supersede the regulations issued in 2005.