

SDO/259/94/Vol V
OPM Circular 9/09

OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
Auberge de Castille
Valletta VLT 2000

21 July 2009

To Permanent Secretaries
Directors General
Directors

Sponsorships for Masters Degrees

1. The Government of Malta will be offering a number of sponsorships to public officers who wish to develop their professional competence and enhance their career prospects. Sponsorships will be available in respect of distance learning or part-time evening Masters degrees offered by recognised educational institutions.
2. In view of its ever changing role and responsibilities, the Public Service has identified key areas that need to be strengthened to enable public managers to meet the demands created. This year, the priority will be given to applications for sponsorships in the areas of **Policy, particularly Public Policy, Social Policy, Environment Policy and other policy areas, Human Resource Management, (with preference given to the more hands-on aspects like selection, compensation, performance management and industrial relations practice), Public Administration, Management of Cultural Entities and /or National Heritage, European Affairs and Administration, Economic Policy and related subjects, and Business and Financial Administration.** Further information on the Sponsorship Scheme including the financial benefits and contractual conditions may be obtained through the SDO website <http://www.sdo.gov.mt/ExternalTraining/MastersDegreeAward.htm> or by contacting Mr Jonathan Sciberras at the Staff Development Organisation on telephone number: 2200 1878 or by e-mail at: jonathan.sciberras@gov.mt
3. These courses require a high level of academic performance and personal commitment on the part of applicants, and only officers with a sound academic background and a proven track record will be considered for sponsorship.
4. Interested officers would be expected to provide information on course content. This information will be required to enable government to award a scholarship. Preference will be given to officers who are not already in possession of a Masters degree.
5. To be eligible for an award, applicants should:
 - a) hold an appointment with the Public Service in Scale 10 (grade of Principal or analogous) or above. A reserve list will also be created for applicants (who satisfy all the other eligibility criteria) whose appointments are below scale 10

and above scale 17 but who nonetheless feel that they have relevant qualities, in relation to the selection criteria, that could be considered by the selection board;

b) have been accepted to read for a Masters degree by the institution concerned. In cases where the degree is being read with a foreign university or college it is the responsibility of applicants to produce an evaluation report on comparability and recognition of the qualification issued by the Malta Qualifications Council (MQC) within the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport. A copy of the said report issued by the MQC should be attached to the application, and the original presented at the interview. Candidates not in possession of this report may still apply, provided that they submit a copy of the report to SDO as soon as it becomes available and in any case by not later than one month from the closing date;

c) have a minimum of one year full-time service with the Government on the closing date of the applications; and

d) not be occupying a position at Director level or above.

6. Officers who satisfy the criteria set out in this Circular are invited to submit a letter of application, together with a detailed and comprehensive Curriculum Vitae as well as a Service and Leave Record (GP 47), through their respective Permanent Secretary, to the Director, Staff Development Organisation (Attn: Mr Jonathan Sciberras) 3, Castille Place, Valletta VLT 2000 by not later than **7 August 2009**. Applications received at SDO will be acknowledged by means of an e-mail.

7. Prospective candidates are encouraged to read carefully the financial and contractual terms and conditions of the sponsorship. It is important to note that the total amount that each applicant will be sponsored will not exceed €8500. Fees over and above this amount will have to be borne by the applicants.

8. Prior to the commencement of their studies, selected officers will be required to sign an undertaking and a notarial deed binding them to serve in the Public Service for a specific period as defined by the Manual on Staff Development in the Public Service (Appendix III) after the completion of their studies.

9. Eligible officers who are already following a distance learning or a part-time evening Masters degree offered by recognised educational institutions in the areas shown in paragraph 2 may also apply for sponsorship, provided that their studies are of the same level as those specified in this Circular, and that they satisfy all the other conditions mentioned above. In this case, if selected, the individual will benefit from pro-rata sponsorship.

10. It is important that this Circular be brought to the attention of all eligible officers in your organisation.

Dr G Grima
Principal Permanent Secretary

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