



## **English Syllabus for the Examination for the Post of Correctional Officer within the Correctional Services Agency 2024**

### **1. Introduction**

The syllabus is designed for candidates sitting for the qualifying examination for the post of Correctional Officer within the Correctional Services Agency. It is pitched at Level 7 of the Learning Outcomes Framework (2015) which is covered in Year 8 Track 3 in State Middle Schools. This can be accessed at

[https://curriculum.gov.mt/en/Curriculum/new\\_syllabi/Documents/Year\\_07\\_08/English\\_LOF\\_Supporting\\_Document\\_yr07\\_yr08\\_updated%202023-2024.pdf](https://curriculum.gov.mt/en/Curriculum/new_syllabi/Documents/Year_07_08/English_LOF_Supporting_Document_yr07_yr08_updated%202023-2024.pdf)

The examination assesses candidates' ability to write fluently and accurately, read fluently and with understanding, as well as to apply their knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and linguistic conventions.

### **2. Assessment Criteria**

#### Reading

Candidates are expected to:

- show understanding and react to a different range of genres and texts: fiction, non-fiction, non-continuous and online texts which serve different purposes, including literary, functional, transactional and/or instructive
- evaluate and respond to texts which include visuals and graphs
- interpret information derived from graphs and graphics
- answer lower-order and higher-order questions about a text at word, phrase, paragraph and text level
- answer questions which address lexical and grammatical competences
- make use of inference and deduction to work out the meaning of unfamiliar words/phrasal verbs/ idiomatic expressions
- make a variety of predictions about a text based on the content available
- distinguish between fact and opinion
- identify intended audience and purpose of texts
- make use of skimming and scanning to read effectively
- distinguish between the main and supporting points of a given text
- make use of inference and deduction when reading
- identify referents (including cataphoric and anaphoric) in a text
- understand text organisation
- compare and contrast across genres
- recognise and understand writers' use of persuasive techniques
- extract and summarise the main points of a text
- identify a range of features and register present in formal and informal texts

Writing:

Candidates are expected to:

- write different types of sentences correctly
- write a text organised in a series of paragraphs
- organise and summarise information in writing
- fill in a form
- produce different text types<sup>7</sup>
- write appropriately for a particular audience and a specific purpose, namely
  - give directions
  - give instructions
  - give and ask for information/news
  - accept or decline an invitation
  - apologise
  - thank someone
  - give and ask for advice/suggestions
  - make a complaint
  - describe an object/activity/person/place
  - persuade
  - narrate
  - give an opinion
  - argue
  - report
  - review
  - inform
- write a text using a wide range of vocabulary
- vary their vocabulary according to the intended reader
- make use of formal and informal register in their writing

### 3. Lexical Competence

Candidates are expected to understand and produce vocabulary related to the following thematic areas:

Personal Information Daily Life and Work Relations with other people House and Home Free Time Entertainment and Media The Arts History and Culture Travel Health and Fitness Sports	Education Shopping Food and Drink Services Places The Environment Weather Social and Global Issues Crime Science and Technology Money and Shopping
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### 4. Grammatical Competence

- Candidates are expected to understand and use accurately:
- high and low frequency words
  - punctuation: capital letter, comma, full stop, question mark, inverted commas, exclamation mark, semi-colon, colon

- nouns
  - used only in the singular
  - used only in the plural
  - countable
  - uncountable
- pronouns: personal, possessive, demonstrative, reflexive, relative
- adjectives, including positive, comparative and superlative
- collocations
- phrasal verbs
- the infinitive
- the gerund
- the affirmative and negative form of the imperative
- the definite and indefinite article: the, a, an, and the zero article
- the determiners: some and any
- the following: present simple, past simple, present continuous, past continuous, present perfect simple, past perfect simple, present perfect continuous, future continuous, future perfect simple, future perfect continuous
- future time by using: going to, will, shall + infinitive, present simple, present continuous, be about to + infinitive, future time in the past
- primary auxiliary verbs (be, have, do)
- modal auxiliaries: can, could, must, shall, should, will, would, may, might, ought to and the semi-modals: dare, need, used to in the affirmative, negative and interrogative forms
- the conditional (first, second and third)
- the present and past participle
- the interrogative with
  - verbs to be, to have, to do
  - wh-questions: what, who, where, when, which, why, how
  - question tags
- statements in the affirmative and negative (including contractions)
- identify linking words to list, add, compare and contrast ideas, sum up
- prepositions of time, place and movement
- adverbials of time, place, manner and frequency
- quantifiers
- the active and passive voice
- -ing and -ed clauses (The girls talking to Tom...The man injured in the accident...)
- direct and indirect speech
- word order
- simple, compound and complex sentences
- prepositional verbs
- affixes indicating prefixes and suffixes to build new words
- affixes to change grammatical class

## 5. Examination

The examination is set out as follows:

Section		Marks (100)	
A. Reading	Text A1	continuous/non-continuous	50
	Text A2	continuous/non-continuous	
B. Writing	Task B1	Short writing	10
	Task B2	Long writing	40

Section A: Candidates are presented with two texts totalling 500 words and can include fiction, non-fiction, functional, informational, transactional and instructive texts. Both texts are based on any of the thematic areas listed in Section 3 (Lexical Competence).

Questions in Section A include multiple choice, fill in the blanks, matching, True/False + reason, information transfer, sequencing, open-ended and close-ended questions.

Section B:

Task B1 In this section, which carries 10 marks, candidates are required to produce a short piece of writing namely, an incident report, between 70 and 80 words.

Task B2 In this section, which carries 40 marks, candidates are required to produce an email of between 180 and 200 words. Candidates are presented with two titles and they are requested to choose one.

The titles in both task B1 and B2 are based on any of the functions in Section 2 (Assessment Criteria) and on the thematic areas listed in Section 3 (Lexical Competence).

The marking criteria for writing are as follows:

- Task achievement
- Organisation and linking
- Grammatical accuracy, including punctuation
- Spelling
- Vocabulary

**END**