

Raising standards through benchmarking and teacher development

Ministry of Education and Employment

Malta



Cambridge Assessment English successfully delivered a two-year benchmarking and teacher development project for the Ministry of Education and Employment (MEDE) in Malta, to support MEDE's strategic vision for a robust bilingual education system.

In order to raise standards of English language proficiency within Maltese schools, MEDE asked Cambridge English to determine current levels of English among primary and secondary students and to devise a professional development strategy to build capacity and confidence across the English language teaching community.

The resulting Malta Ministry of Education Partnership Project comprised two phases, delivered over two years. In Phase One, Cambridge English undertook an extensive benchmarking study which analysed the English ability of over 1,200 students. The study looked at linguistic performance across all four language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking), and also reviewed results by gender and by school type.

Phase Two focused on the delivery of a continuous professional development programme for both experienced and less confident English teachers. As part of the programme, Cambridge English provided a 'train

the trainer' course to develop capacity and established a group of 'master trainers' who then worked alongside senior MEDE training experts.

Cambridge English also worked directly with teachers to help them develop the skills they needed to teach English effectively, and gave them the opportunity to gain internationally recognised teaching qualifications. These included the Cambridge English Certificate in English Language Teaching (CELTA) for both primary and secondary levels, and TKT (the Teaching Knowledge Test) designed to improve classroom-based teaching practice.

The Partnership Project was formally completed in July 2017; the results of the benchmarking study were used to inform curriculum reforms, learning outcomes and teaching practice, while MEDE continues to deliver the teacher development programme following the Cambridge model.

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