

# Guide to Study and Living in Malta

## International Master's Program in Environmental Management and Sustainability James Madison University and the University of Malta

Students formally accepted into the International Master's Program in Environmental Management and Sustainability will receive an extensive handbook on study, travel preparation, accommodations, and living in Malta. This guide is intended to provide general information to prospective students. For more details about the program, please contact Dr. Maria Papadakis at [papadamc@jmu.edu](mailto:papadamc@jmu.edu) or visit our website at [www.jmu.edu/mems-malta](http://www.jmu.edu/mems-malta).

### The University Setting

Lecture-based classwork for our program occurs exclusively in Malta over a period of nine months, and most of your studies will be at the University of Malta's historic Valetta facility. However, you also have access to resources at the nearby main university campus, including the library, bookstore, and computer labs.

### National Languages

Maltese and English are the official national languages of Malta. All instruction is in English; your professors are accomplished faculty from both universities.

### Money and Banking

Malta is a member of the European Union and its currency is the Euro (€). North American ATM cards work in Malta, so you can maintain your personal bank account at home and manage it with on-line banking tools.

### Healthcare and Medications

Malta enjoys a high standard of living and its hospitals and healthcare facilities are modern and comprehensive. Registered students from non-EU countries are entitled to free treatment at public hospitals and healthcare centers **only** in the event of an emergency. US students are required to pay a small monthly fee for medical insurance while living overseas. Students from the EU, EEA member states, and Switzerland have access to Malta's public health care services upon presentation of their European Health Insurance Card. All others may buy health insurance

through the University of Malta and we will help arrange this if needed. You should bring enough of your prescription medications to last for your time overseas, or else consult with your physician to identify the European equivalent so that they may be prescribed locally. Mailing prescription drugs to Malta is difficult and not advised.

### Visas

Americans and Canadians do not require a visa to enter Malta. You must apply for a residence permit and have 90 days upon your arrival in Malta to do so.

### Accommodations

Students customarily share private, full-service apartments with 2-3 roommates from the international master's programs in Malta. We help you arrange housing.

### Cultural Competency

Your graduate experience in Malta will shape your intercultural awareness, build **your self-confidence, and reinforce your** intellectual curiosity. The experiences and lessons that you will gain will encourage new levels of sophistication and tolerance.

### History and Culture

Malta has a long and rich history in Western Europe. Some of the most ancient architectures of civilization can be found here, including Neolithic temples

older than Stonehenge, Roman villas, and early Christian sacred sites. Malta is home to several UNESCO World Heritage sites; many museums, churches, and cathedrals house artworks from some of Europe's great masters, such as Caravaggio and Albrecht



*Most of your studies will be at the University of Malta's historic Valetta campus, a building that dates from the early Renaissance but has all of our modern amenities.*

Dürer. Malta's modern history begins with the Crusades, when the Knights established major cities and fortifications on the island. Prior to its national independence in the early 1960s, Malta had been a British protectorate for 150 years.

## Computing and Internet Access

Internet access in Malta is good and readily available at University facilities and in private accommodations through Internet service providers. There are also Internet cafes and WiFi access is growing. You must bring a laptop with you. You will need computing resources and software that don't always work on other devices.

## Cell Phones

You can arrange for Maltese cell phone service or continue to use your personal cell phone with the appropriate SIM card or roaming application. The cheapest way to call the United States or Canada is by using Skype. In addition to free Skype-to-Skype calling features, Skype credit subscriptions allow you to call landlines and cell phones in North America inexpensively.

## Mail and Postal Services

Malta has highly efficient international letter and parcel post. However, it is best if you do not plan on shipping large packages of personal effects to yourself because of import duties, customs, and so on; further guidance on the best way to manage postal shipping of needed items will be provided with your official trip and travel preparation guide for the program.

## Working in Malta

Some students contemplate working in Malta as a fun way to earn extra money or learn the culture better. James Madison University expressly forbids any non-EU citizen from working for an outside organization or individual while in the International Master's Program, and the legal consequences of doing so are very severe. Non EU-citizens do not have the same rights when it comes to employment and residence.

## Alcohol and Drugs

The legal drinking age in Malta is 17. If you choose to drink alcohol, please do so responsibly, bearing in mind the potential consequences of your actions and behaviors. No illegal drugs are allowed. Any student found using or possessing illegal drugs, or associating with drug dealers, will immediately be expelled from the program and judicial action will be taken through James Madison University. You are also governed by Maltese law while

living in Malta. If you are caught with any illegal substance you will be arrested and subject to the laws of the Maltese state.

## Electricity and Electrical Appliances

We encourage American and Canadian students not to use North American hair dryers, straighteners, or curling irons. Most standard hair devices will not be compatible with the Maltese electrical current even with adapters/convertors/transformers. These appliances are best bought once in Malta. Otherwise, plug adapters for electrical outlets are easy to find in Malta and inexpensive.

## Airline Travel

It is your responsibility to arrange travel to Malta. The destination is Malta International Airport (the airport code is MLA). Flights to Malta connect from a number of airports in Europe and parts of Asia. You can easily arrange taxi service from the airport to your accommodations, most of which are a short 20-25 minute drive away. The logistics of travel to Malta are quite straightforward.

## Getting Around

Malta has an extensive and inexpensive public bus system that will get you to virtually anywhere you want to go. Reduced-cost bus passes for students are available. Cars are not necessary for daily living and travel, but can be rented for weekend trips or exploration. Ferry service is available to the local Maltese island of Gozo and to Sicily.

## What to Bring

We will provide you with a detailed packing and travel checklist upon your formal acceptance to the program. Generally speaking, you will only need to bring clothing, a laptop computer, prescription medications, an alarm clock, a calculator, spare glasses/contact lenses, backpack, and so on. We will provide you with a welcome kit that includes basic first aid supplies, among other items. School supplies are readily available and inexpensive in Malta, as are toiletries and hygiene products.

## In the Event of an Emergency

We have abundant guidance on how to handle a wide variety of emergencies that might occur while you are in Malta, including if you get sick or badly injured, experience legal difficulties, or need to contact your embassy or consulate. We have highly experienced people on the ground who will help you in urgent situations.