

# EkoSkola Accreditation

Non-Formal Award in the  
EkoSkola Programme



## Contents

<b>Introduction:</b> .....	2
<b>Choice of levels:</b> .....	2
<b>Competencies:</b> .....	3
<b>Learning Outcomes:</b> .....	5
<b>Student requirements for accreditation:</b> .....	9
<b>Requirements from link-educators:</b> .....	9
<b>Applying for accreditation:</b> .....	10

## **Introduction:**

The Eco-Schools programme, locally known as EkoSkola, is now an accredited programme. The programme is accredited by the Accreditation Unit within the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education (DQSE) at three levels, namely at MQF level 1, MQF level 2 and MQF level 3.

Each level carries 3 ECTS (3 credits), where each ECTS is equivalent to 25 hours of direct contact time as committee members within the seven-step methodology of the EkoSkola programme and 3 hours of self-study or research.

## **Choice of levels:**

The levels of the EkoSkola accreditation correspond to the different phases of schooling as indicated below:

MQF level 1 – focus at Primary level

MQF level 2 – focus at Middle school ages (11-13 years)

MQF level 3 – focus at Secondary year groups (13-16 years)

Students who are committee members in primary schools, middle schools and secondary schools can obtain one certificate in each of the different levels. Students in middle schools or secondary schools do not need to start at level 1. They can directly obtain certification at levels 2 or 3, depending on the competencies they have reached and learning objectives they have attained.

Accumulated hours can be carried forward from Primary to Middle School and from Middle School to Secondary school on a case-by-case basis in liaison with the EkoSkola link persons from feeder schools.

Students can also be accredited in the scholastic year in which the Green Flag is not up for renewal as long as the seven-step methodology and the expected number of hours have been completed. The initial year of accreditation will be effective as from scholastic year 2023-2024.

## Competencies:

Below is a list of competencies for each level which the students are expected to obtain before certification:

MQF Level 1	MQF level 2	MQF level 3
<p><b>1. Basic Environmental Awareness:</b> Demonstrate an understanding of basic concepts of environmental conservation, such as recycling, energy conservation, and biodiversity.</p>	<p><b>1. Systemic Thinking:</b> Understand the interconnectedness of environmental, social, and economic pillars of sustainability and the implications of their actions at a local, regional, and global levels.</p>	<p><b>1. Prioritisation Skills:</b> Develop the ability to prioritise environmental needs and develop sustainable solutions based on urgency and available resources.</p>
<p><b>2. Respect for the environment:</b> Develop a sense of respect and responsibility towards the natural world and for living organisms and ecosystems in a controlled environment.</p>	<p><b>2. Advocacy:</b> Become empowered to advocate for sustainability in their schools and local communities by leading actions that have a positive impact and promote awareness.</p>	<p><b>2. Public speaking and policy making:</b> Promote skills to actively participate in discussions about sustainable policies and practices at local and national levels, advocating for environmental issues through informed dialogue and engagement.</p>
<p><b>3. Inquiry Based Learning:</b> Develop critical thinking skills by asking questions and making observations about environmental phenomena in a controlled environment.</p>	<p><b>3. Leadership:</b> Develop leadership skills and lead environmental actions in their schools and communities and discuss with policymakers to bring about effective change.</p>	<p><b>3. Interdisciplinarity:</b> Explore sustainability issues through a multidisciplinary approach, integrating knowledge from various fields to understand and address complex environmental challenges.</p>
<p><b>4. Collaboration and Cooperation:</b> Work in a team and collaborate under guidance to identify and address local environmental challenges in achieving the goals outlined in their action plan.</p>	<p><b>4. Critical Thinking:</b> Collect and analyse data for monitoring environmental issues, fostering critical thinking skills to evaluate information effectively.</p>	<p><b>4. Lifelong learning:</b> Foster a commitment to continuous personal growth and leadership skills development, promoting lifelong learning and active participation in environmental stewardship.</p>

<p><b>5. Experiential Learning:</b> Engage in a controlled environment in hands-on experiences, such as gardening, nature walks, and environmental experiments, to deepen the connection to nature and sustainability, enhancing understanding through direct engagement.</p>	<p><b>5. Ethical Decision Making:</b> Explore the ethical dimensions of environmental issues, consider the long-term consequences of different courses of action and encourage responsible decision-making.</p>	<p><b>5. Digital Literacy:</b> Develop skills to critically analyse and interpret information about environmental issues across various forms of media platforms, while discerning reliable sources and understanding the influence of media on public perceptions</p>
<p><b>6. Emotional evaluation:</b> Identify and label their emotions in relation to environmental experiences, fostering emotional awareness and understanding of their personal reactions to given environmental issues such as planting a tree or concerns about pollution in their neighbourhood.</p>	<p><b>6. Cultural Competence</b> Explore different cultural perspectives on environmental stewardship and sustainability, fostering an appreciation for diverse ways of living in harmony with the Earth.</p>	<p><b>6. Self-awareness:</b> Develop self-awareness to recognize personal strengths and areas for growth in relation to environmental actions, fostering confidence and empowerment in making positive changes in their lives beyond formal education.</p>

## Learning Outcomes:

The learning outcomes are based on the four pillars of learning: Learning to know, Learning to do, Learning to live together and Learning to be.

<b>Learning to Know</b>			
<b>Suggested Activities</b>	<b>MQF Level 1</b>	<b>MQF Level 2</b>	<b>MQF Level 3</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Committee meetings</li> <li>2. Debates</li> <li>3. Data collection using checklists</li> <li>4. Drafting of action plan</li> <li>5. Research</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can recall basic environmental terms such as recycling, conservation, etc.</li> <li>• I can describe basic environmental issues in my school.</li> <li>• I can recall facts about given environmental topics, like laws to protect nature and fairness.</li> <li>• I can remember given information to interpret simple data.</li> <li>• I can recall the various roles in a committee.</li> <li>• I can recall the importance of having an action plan to reach environmental targets.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can describe environmental terms.</li> <li>• I can critically describe environmental issues in and beyond my school.</li> <li>• I can describe advanced environmental ideas, such as rules about nature and justice for everyone.</li> <li>• I can demonstrate the importance of data to set goals based on information.</li> <li>• I can describe the various roles in a committee.</li> <li>• I can describe environmental issues in my school and the community, using critical thinking skills to assess their impact.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can explain environmental issues and suggest solutions using my understanding of environmental terms.</li> <li>• I can stay informed about emerging sustainability trends and explain global environmental challenges.</li> <li>• I can explore complex environmental concepts, such as policies that protect the environment and ensure justice for all.</li> <li>• I can explain the underlying causes of an environmental issues and propose solutions.</li> <li>• I can explain the various roles in a committee and the associated responsibilities.</li> <li>• I can explore complex environmental issues and the interconnectedness to social and economic factors.</li> </ul>

**Learning to Do**

Suggested Activities	MQF Level 1	MQF Level 2	MQF Level 3
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Carrying out environmental audits</li> <li>2. Environmental activities</li> <li>3. Filling portfolio</li> <li>4. Monitoring and evaluation of environmental action plan</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can observe and identify environmental issues in my school.</li> <li>• With assistance I can develop simple actions to implement eco-friendly measures.</li> <li>• I can monitor progress of eco-initiatives using simple target indicators.</li> <li>• I can collect environmental data using pre-set forms.</li> <li>• Under mentoring I can fill in an environmental portfolio by following simple instructions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can critically analyse environmental issues around me.</li> <li>• I can develop comprehensive action plans addressing specific environmental issues by setting goals and timelines.</li> <li>• I can develop target indicators that allow me to monitor the progress of environmental goals.</li> <li>• I can collect and critically analyse data.</li> <li>• I can fill in an environmental portfolio according to the requirements provided by the EkoSkola programme.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can critically analyse environmental issues identifying underlying causes.</li> <li>• I can create an ambitious action plan that can be extended beyond the school.</li> <li>• I can implement monitoring and evaluation protocols to measure the impact of projects and their outcomes on the environment.</li> <li>• I can devise campaigns that adopt a whole school approach and foster community engagement.</li> <li>• I can fill in an environmental portfolio according to requirements and include elements of self-reflection.</li> </ul>

<b>Learning to Live Together</b>			
<b>Suggested Activities</b>	<b>MQF Level 1</b>	<b>MQF Level 2</b>	<b>MQF Level 3</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teamwork activities</li> <li>2. Meetings with stakeholders</li> <li>3. Participation in activities such as student summits</li> <li>4. Outings</li> <li>5. Organizing events/activities</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can discuss how dealing with sustainability themes across different subjects will help reach a wider audience.</li> <li>• I can appreciate the benefits of working in a committee/team.</li> <li>• I can listen to other people's opinion.</li> <li>• I can demonstrate that involving stakeholders is an important stepping stone to achieve sustainability.</li> <li>• I am able to participate in environmental initiatives organised by the EkoSkola committee.</li> <li>• I can demonstrate that Earth is our common home, and that sustainability can only be achieved through a healthy relationship with oneself, others and the environment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As part of the EkoSkola committee I can advocate for the inclusion of environmental themes in the school curriculum.</li> <li>• I am able to work in a team and take leadership roles.</li> <li>• I can listen to other people's opinion and evaluate and understand what they are saying.</li> <li>• I am able to involve stakeholders to achieve the goals set by the EkoSkola committee.</li> <li>• I can organise outreach campaigns and community events to mobilise support for sustainability initiatives.</li> <li>• I can work with others to foster healthy relationships within the community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can collaborate with adults to include sustainability related material and real life challenges in lessons.</li> <li>• I can collaborate and cooperate with others to promote good teamwork and take leadership roles.</li> <li>• I can listen to other people's opinion and have a healthy discussion that includes different viewpoints.</li> <li>• I can establish relationships with different stakeholders to make use of their expertise and resources to scale up sustainability efforts.</li> <li>• I can organise and evaluate with others the impact of sustainability initiatives and discuss ways of improvement.</li> <li>• I can work with others to champion for healthy relationships that promote inclusion, peace and sustainability in general.</li> </ul>



<b>Learning to Be</b>			
<b>Suggested Activities</b>	<b>MQF Level 1</b>	<b>MQF Level 2</b>	<b>MQF Level 3</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Creating an eco-code</li> <li>2. Public speaking events</li> <li>3. Research material</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can develop an eco-code that reflects my commitment to sustainability.</li> <li>• I can start to understand that my actions have an impact on the world around me.</li> <li>• I appreciate the need to look for information about environmental issues.</li> <li>• I can respect all forms of life.</li> <li>• I am aware of my strengths and weaknesses as a human being.</li> <li>• I can publicly address an audience following prepared material.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can create and follow an eco-code that embodies the values of environmental stewardship.</li> <li>• I am aware that my actions have an impact on the world around me and critically assess these impacts on the environment.</li> <li>• I can analyse information, question and evaluate evidence regarding sustainability challenges and solutions.</li> <li>• I can appreciate all forms of life and recognise their intrinsic value.</li> <li>• I understand my values, beliefs, strengths and weaknesses in relation to sustainability issues.</li> <li>• I can prepare digital material to advocate for sustainable development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can actively participate in the development of an inspiring eco-code that reflects the aspirations and vision of the school community and serves as guiding principle towards sustainable action.</li> <li>• I can critically analyse my lifestyle and life choices and find ways on how to reduce the impact they have on the environment.</li> <li>• I can critically assess the validity of arguments, recognise biases, and make informed decisions that support sustainability goals.</li> <li>• I can advocate for biodiversity conservation respecting the right to life.</li> <li>• I am self-aware of my strengths and how to make good use of them for the wellbeing of others and of the environment.</li> <li>• I can critically engage with peers, stakeholders and policy makers to advocate for sustainable development.</li> </ul>

## **Student requirements for accreditation:**

For students to obtain accreditation, they need to fulfil the following criteria:

1. Students need to be actively involved as EkoSkola committee members for 60 weeks within a maximum of 2 years (ideally, but not exclusively, within the school's Green Flag cycle).
2. Students need to have experienced the implementation of the EkoSkola seven-step methodology.
3. Given that accreditation is 3 ECTS, contact time should cover at least 80% of the required 75 hours. Contact time involves committee meetings, environmental audits, assemblies, school outings (always calculated as 6 hours), research, etc. Sickness covered by medical certificate is considered as attendance.
4. If they have followed the seven-step methodology of the EkoSkola programme, students would have automatically acquired basic competences and learning outcomes associated with each level (no ticking is required).

## **Requirements from link-educators:**

Link educators are required to keep records that are a requisite when submitting the school's Green Flag portfolio. These include:

1. Student attendance for EkoSkola committee meetings
2. A copy of the environmental review
3. Meeting minutes
4. A soft copy of the action plan
5. A sample of 2-3 lesson plans used during the year
6. A copy of the Eco-Code
7. Photos from in-house activities or outings
8. Photos showing updates of the EkoSkola noticeboard

Link educators should have this material readily available for any verifications required by the Accreditation Unit within DQSE. EkoSkola teachers (from Nature Trust – FEE Malta) are to be invited to visit the school at least once per term to provide better assistance.

### **Applying for accreditation:**

First applications for student accreditation will be received with the Green Flag portfolios as from 2025.

EkoSkola link persons are to list the student names and surnames who deserve accreditation and indicate at which MQF level each student will be receiving accreditation on the online [EkoSkola Accreditation Form](#). The form should be submitted by the end of the last week of April.

A certificate for each student will be sent as soft copy to the school's official email address as the entity responsible for the validation of the student's work in attaining the accreditation (See Appendix 1).

Students attending middle/secondary schools can also have the EkoSkola accreditation showing on their Secondary School Certificate Profile (SSC&P). State schools should find the EkoSkola programme in the drop-down list under the non-formal activity section.

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