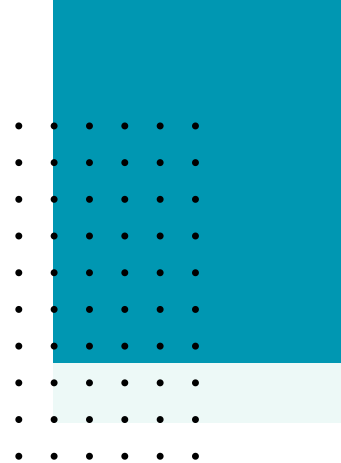


2025 - 2028

# APPLIED VOCATIONAL CERTIFICATE IN **RETAIL**



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## Subject Programme

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### **Award in Applied Retail (MQF 3)**

The Award in Applied Retail (MQF 3) is designed to provide students with a comprehensive introduction to the dynamic world of retail. This course offers a blend of theoretical knowledge and practical experience, fostering both technical proficiency and creative problem-solving skills. Throughout the programme, learners will be introduced to the foundational elements of retail, including customer service, merchandising, sales techniques, inventory management, and retail operations. These core areas equip students with the essential skills required to excel in a modern retail environment.

The course encourages the development of a customer-focused mindset while promoting both teamwork and independent initiative. By engaging with industry-standard practices and tools, students gain the confidence to pursue further studies or career opportunities in retail. This programme offers a strong foundation for personal and professional growth within the retail sector, preparing learners to meet the evolving demands of the industry.

By the end of the programme students will be able to:

- Develop an understanding in various elements relating to the retail industry.
- Foster necessary skills and attributes required to instil social responsibility within the retail environment.
- Gain knowledge on the various financial aspects related to retail.
- Enhance creativity skills which can be applied to a retail setting.





## Assessment

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Throughout the three-year programme, candidates will be assessed in order to ensure that the unit learning outcomes have been achieved. To achieve each outcome candidates must satisfy the Assessment Criteria for the respective unit, which criteria are listed in the sections below. Assessment will be carried out through different components, which together add up to a global mark of a maximum of 300 marks.

The components include:

### Coursework:

This refers to the two assignments set by teachers and given to candidates once internally verified. Each assignment should contain both written and practical tasks. An Assessment Front Sheet is to be completed for every assignment. Once the candidate's work is corrected, marks and feedback are to be inputted in the Assessment Front Sheet of each candidate. These assessment decisions, like the assignment briefs, also need to be internally verified.

### Controlled Assessment:

This refers to the assessment set by the Director and issued through the Education Assessment Unit (EAU) during the last term of the scholastic year. This assessment includes both written and practical tasks and covers the grading criteria indicated in the Assessment Criteria section of each unit. The controlled grading criteria are listed in the syllabus. It should be noted that for this assessment the Assessment Front Sheet is to be filled in and assessment decisions should be internally verified.

### Portfolio

Throughout the three-year programme, candidates are required to keep a portfolio. The main aim of this portfolio is to showcase the candidate's work and skills obtained. More information about the portfolio can be found on page 41.





## Programme Certification

Upon completion of the three-year programme, candidates will receive a certificate and a certificate supplement indicating the MQF Level achieved. Each applied vocational subject within the AVC programme is structured to be qualified at MQF Level 3, with possible exit points at MQF Level 2 or MQF Level 1. The final qualification level depends on the total marks obtained by the candidate over the three years (with a maximum of 300 marks) as indicated in the table below.

Candidates who are absent for an entire year of the programme can qualify up to a maximum of MQF Level 2, while those absent for two full years can qualify up to a maximum of MQF Level 1.

Marks obtained across the three years	Grade	AWARD
270 - 300	1	MQF Level 3
240 - 269	2	
210 - 239	3	
180 - 209	4	
150 - 179	5	
120 - 149	6	MQF Level 2
90 - 119	7	
60 - 89	8	MQF Level 1
0 - 59	N/A	Fail



## Quality Assurance

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Assessment is a fundamental component of the learning process. It provides candidates with feedback on their progress and achievements while adhering to key standards of reliability, validity, and fairness. To maintain these standards, it is crucial to follow established rules and procedures. The assessment guidelines ensure that all evaluations are:

- Aligned with the appropriate standards, quality, and level.
- Fair and equitable to all students.
- Valid and reliable.

In order to ensure quality, assignment briefs and assessment decisions undergo internal verification by the designated internal verifier. This process ensures that assessments align with the intended learning outcomes and comply with established policy procedures. Furthermore, moderation will be conducted each academic year by moderators that will evaluate candidates work based on a specified rubric and moderation criteria ensuring that work has been fairly, accurately and consistently graded. During both internal verification and moderation, candidates marks are subject to change.





## Applied Vocational Certificate Programme

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The Applied Vocational Certificate (AVC) programme is designed to emphasize the practical application of vocational subjects, providing students with hands-on experience directly related to the workplace. This programme is aligned with the Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF) and offers a final certification at MQF Level 3, with exit points at MQF Levels 1 and 2. To earn the final certificate, candidates must complete all three units over the secondary cycle and meet the requirements for coursework and controlled assessments as outlined in the specific subject syllabi.

The AVC programme focuses on equipping candidates with both theoretical knowledge and practical skills relevant to specific industries, preparing them for future employability or education. This skills-based approach ensures that students develop the competencies necessary for the workforce while also providing a clear pathway for academic progression. The programme supports continuous learning, with opportunities to advance to post-secondary institutions that offer courses at MQF Levels 1–3, and potentially even higher, such as MQF Level 4. Recognized and accredited by various educational institutions, the AVC programme represents a vital step in the lifelong learning journey, aligning with both industry needs and educational standards.

Spanning over three scholastic years (Years 9, 10 and 11) and comprising 10 credits, the AVC programme fosters the development of technical and vocational skills in specific industries. This structure supports the holistic growth of candidates, preparing them not only for future employment but also for future academic pursuits in line with this policy's objectives and the relevant subject syllabi.



# UNIT 1:

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## RETAIL ESSENTIALS

### Unit Description:

This unit introduces learners to the core practices that keep a shop safe, organised, stocked and customer-ready. Through practical activities, they prepare, organise, and clean work areas, follow basic health and safety procedures, and recognise the main work areas and job roles.

Learners receive, handle and store goods using simple equipment, work as a team to provide basic customer care and communicate appropriately and apply tags to prepare items for display. They also learn how to deal with financial basics such as common currencies, payment equipment, methods and counting & reconciling cash. Throughout, learners practise accuracy, numeracy and record-keeping (e.g., delivery notes, stock sheets, cash reports) and develop safe, respectful behaviour in a real or simulated retail setting.

### Learning outcomes:

At the end of the unit, I can:

LO 1: Demonstrate an understanding of retail and retail operations

LO 2: Understanding the necessary skills when dealing with customers and colleagues

LO 3: Tagging and introduction to display set up

LO 4: Dealing with currencies, payment equipment and payment methods





## Assessment Criteria and Content

<b>Subject Focus:</b>	Retail Basics		
<b>LO 1.</b>	Demonstrate an understanding of retail and retail operations.		
	<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Level 3</b>
<b>K1</b>	K-1. Define the term retail. (1 mark)	K-1. List <b>TEN</b> different types of shops. (1 mark)	K-1. Outline <b>FOUR</b> different buying methods. (2 marks)
	<b>Level 2</b> – Different types of shops: Department stores, Shopping malls, Supermarkets, Mini-markets, Convenience shops, Speciality stores, Discount stores (wholesaler), Franchises, Flea markets, Vending trucks, Kiosks, Takeaways, Vending machines, Online shopping, Teleshopping  <b>N.B. Door-to-door trading and Catalogues can be mentioned during lesson delivery but are not to be assessed.</b>		
	<b>Level 3</b> – Different buying methods: Click and collect, In-store shopping, Teleshopping, Online shopping		
<b>K2</b>	K-2. Label <b>FOUR</b> elements of the retail supply chain. (1 mark)	K-2. Outline the <b>FOUR</b> elements of the retail supply chain. (1 mark)	K-2. Describe <b>TWO</b> characteristics of a product and a service. (2 marks)
	<b>Level 1 &amp; 2</b> – The retail supply chain: Manufacturer, Supplier/Wholesaler, Retailer, Customer  <b>Level 3</b> – Characteristics of a product or service: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Products : Tangible, Owned, Manufactured, Can be given to someone</li> <li>• Services : Intangible , Cannot be stored, Performed by a service provider, User participation</li> </ul>		
<b>K3</b>	K-3. State <b>FOUR</b> different work areas in a retail setting. (1 mark)	K-3. Match <b>TWO</b> job roles to their respective areas. (1 mark)	K-3. Outline <b>TWO</b> functions of any <b>TWO</b> work areas. (2 marks)
	<b>Level 1</b> – Work areas: Warehouse / Storage Area, Goods Display Area, Customer Support Service Area, Back Office, Check-out Area  <b>Level 2</b> – Job roles : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warehouse/Storage Area – Stacker, Stock Controller, Delivery Person, Storekeeper, Retail Manager</li> <li>• Goods Display Area – Stacker, Retail Manager, Shop Assistant, Visual Merchandiser, Product Promoter</li> <li>• Customer Support Service Area – Retail Manager, Shop Assistant, Customer Care Representative</li> <li>• Back Office – Retail Manager, Owner, Marketeer, Data analyst, HR</li> <li>• Check-out Area – Retail Manager, Shop Assistant, Cashier</li> </ul>		
	<b>Level 3</b> – Functions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warehouse / Storage Area – Receiving and Storing</li> <li>• Goods Display Area – Merchandising and Promoting goods or services</li> <li>• Customer Support Service Area – Assisting customers and Offering after-sale service</li> <li>• Back Office – Finance and Marketing</li> <li>• Check-out Area – Processing Payments and Processing Returns</li> </ul> <b>N.B. It is recommended to cover K3 and C1 simultaneously.</b>		

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<b>C1</b>	C-1. List <b>TEN</b> different job roles within the retail sector. (2 marks)	C-1. Describe <b>FIVE</b> different job roles. (2 marks)	C-1. Explain <b>TWO</b> skills and <b>TWO</b> attributes required for a specific job role. (2 marks)
	<b>Level 1 &amp; 2 –</b> Job roles: Owner, Retail Manager, Cashier, Shop Assistant, Stacker, Stock Controller, Visual Merchandiser, Product Promoter, Delivery person, Customer Care Representative, Storekeeper, Marketeer, Data Analyst, HR  <b>Level 3 –</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skills : Time Management, Product Knowledge, Cash Handling, Teamwork, Merchandising, Problem Solving, Communication, Literacy and Numeracy, Organisation</li> <li>Attributes: Good Personal Appearance, Flexibility and Adaptability, Multitasking, Pro-activity, Honesty and Integrity, Empathy and Patience, Politeness, Positive Attitude, Confidence, Reliability</li> </ul>		
<b>A1</b>	A-1. Prepare the necessary tools and equipment required to clean a retail area. (3 marks)	A-1. Organise the work area. (3 marks)	A-1. Clean the work area. (4 marks)
	<b>Level 1 –</b> Tools and Equipment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protective Equipment : Gloves, Protective eye - wear, Overalls, Safe shoes</li> <li>Tools: Vacuum cleaner OR Broom and Dust-pan, Mop and Bucket, Microfibre Cleaning Cloth, Squeegee, Waste Disposal Container and Bags</li> <li>Materials: Disinfectant OR Sanitiser, Glass Cleaning Liquid, Bleach, Surface Cleaner, Degreaser</li> </ul> <b>Level 2 –</b> Organisation of the working area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove misplaced goods</li> <li>Remove damaged goods</li> <li>Place goods in order</li> </ul> <b>Level 3 –</b> Clean the work area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove litter and clear bins</li> <li>Use the appropriate materials, tools and equipment</li> <li>Maintain walkways free of any obstructions</li> <li>Clean work areas appropriately</li> </ul>		
<b>K-4</b>	K-4. List <b>FOUR</b> health and safety measures applied during the given scenario. (1 mark)	K-4. Identify <b>FOUR</b> different Health and Safety Signs. (1 mark)	K-4. Explain <b>FOUR</b> consequences of bad health and safety measures on the business. (2 marks)
	<b>Level 1 –</b> Health and Safety Measures: Wear the appropriate PPE, Follow the health and safety signs, Check equipment before use, Deal with hazardous substances safely, Use cleaning products appropriately, Remove obstructions, Store tools and products appropriately  <b>Level 2 –</b> Health and Safety Signs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Blue – Mandatory (i.e Mandatory Mask Signs, Restricted Area Signs)</li> <li>Red – Prohibition or Danger (i.e No Smoking Signs, Food Safety Signs)</li> <li>Yellow – Caution (i.e Wet Floor Signs)</li> <li>Green – First Aid (i.e Fire Exit Signs, First Aid Signs)</li> </ul> <b>Level 3 –</b> Consequences of bad health and safety measures: Injuries, Loss of products, Legal Implications, Bad Image		



	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
	A-2. Preparation of storage area prior to receiving goods. (3 marks)	A-2. Handling goods in a safe way. (3 marks)	A-2. Placement of goods in the storage area. (4 marks)
<b>A2</b>	<p><b>Level 1</b> – Preparation of storage area: Ensure enough storage space is available, Remove any hazards, Check handling equipment</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> – Handling goods in a safe way: Wear appropriate protective equipment, Use the appropriate handling equipment, Push, Pull, Lift, Carry goods manually or mechanically</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> – Placement of goods: Select appropriate location for the goods, Place the goods in the appropriate receptacles or shelves safely, Maximise use of space, Consideration of human factors and ergonomics.</p>		

<b>Subject Focus:</b>	Social Responsibility		
<b>LO 2.</b>	Understanding the necessary skills when dealing with customers and colleagues.		
	<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Level 3</b>
	K-5. Identify <b>FOUR</b> correct examples of good personal presentation. (1 mark)	K-5. Differentiate between verbal and non-verbal communication skills by including <b>TWO</b> examples of each. (1 mark)	K-5. Explain how any <b>TWO</b> verbal and any <b>TWO</b> non-verbal communication skills were used during the given scenario in A3. (2 marks)
<b>K5</b>	<p><b>Level 1 – Personal Presentation :</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clothing (i.e Ironed clothes, Smart clothing)</li> <li>• Personal hygiene (i.e Clean hair, nails and teeth, Fresh breath, No body odour)</li> <li>• Good grooming (i.e Neat hair, No excessive make-up and/or perfume)</li> <li>• Communication (i.e Verbal and Non-Verbal communication)</li> </ul> <p><b>Level 2 &amp; 3 – Communication Skills :</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Verbal</u>: Greeting, Language, Open-ended questions, Checking for understanding, Tone, Pace;</li> <li>• <u>Non-Verbal</u>: Greeting (smile 😊), Proximity, Facial expressions, Posture</li> </ul> <p><b>N.B. Level 3 is to be answered following the implementation of practical A3.</b></p>		
	C-2. Define customer care. (2 marks)	C-2. Explain <b>TWO</b> of the customer care stages which can be offered in a retail setting. (2 marks)	C-2. Justify the importance of why customer care is used in the <b>TWO</b> stages explained in Level 2. (2 marks)
<b>C2</b>	<b>Level 2 &amp; 3 – Customer Care stages :</b> Pre-sale service, During sale-service, During delivery (if applicable), After-sales service		
	A-3. Employ effective teamwork in a given customer care scenario. (3 marks)	A-3. Practice the necessary skills and attributes in a given customer care scenario. (3 marks)	A-3. Demonstrate the correct verbal and non-verbal skills in a given customer care scenario. (4 marks)
<b>A3</b>	<p><b>Level 1 – Teamwork :</b> Clarity in communicating issue, Discussing issues professionally (offering solutions), Encouragement and positivity (a can-do attitude)</p> <p><b>Level 2 – Skills and attributes :</b> Appropriate greeting, Respect, Dedication, Taking responsibility, Active listening and empathy, Problem solving</p> <p><b>Level 3 – Communication Skills :</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal : Language, Open-ended questions, Checking for understanding, Tone, Pace</li> <li>• Non-Verbal : Greeting (smile 😊), Proximity, Facial Expressions, Posture</li> </ul>		



<b>Subject Focus:</b>	Creativity		
<b>LO 3.</b>	Tagging and introduction to display set up		
<b>K6</b>	<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Level 3</b>
	K-6. List <b>FIVE</b> different types of tags available . (1 mark)	K-6 Indicate the information commonly displayed on tags. (1 mark)	K-6. Describe <b>FOUR</b> reasons why it is important for products to be tagged properly. (2 marks)
<b>C3</b>	<b>Level 1</b> – Tags: Tie string tags, Sticker Labels, clothes tags, Digital tags, Printed Shelf tags, Security tags or Labels, Alteration Tags, Layaway or On-Hold tags.  <b>Level 2</b> – Final price including tax, Unit price for products sold by volume or weight, Origin of an item, Discounts or Promotional Information  <b>Level 3</b> – Legal Requirements (Price indication Regulations), Information for customers to remove confusion, Identification of value for money, Security, Seller Identification, Product promotion		
	C-3. Outline different colour harmonies within a retail context. (2 marks)	C-3. Create a mood-board for displaying a product including basic elements. (2 marks)	C-3. Evaluate the final display done in practical A4. (2 marks)
<b>A4</b>	<b>Level 1</b> – Harmonies : Monochromatic, Analogous, Complimentary, Triadic.  <b>Level 2</b> – Basic elements of a mood board : Colour scheme, Images used, Textures and Materials, Final Layout  <b>Level 3</b> – Evaluation of final display : Colour scheme and harmony , Effective use of space, Display in line with mood-board, Product visibility, Grouping, Theme clarity, Creativity or Originality  <b>N.B The mood board needs to be created based on products which are readily available in the lab and which will be used in A4.</b>		
	A-4. Prepare <b>TWO</b> tools and <b>FOUR</b> tags required for tagging products. (3 marks)	A-4. Complete retail information on tags and apply tags to products to be sold. (3 marks)	A-4. Set up an attractive display using the tagged products by including <b>FOUR</b> elements. (4 marks)
<b>A4</b>	<b>Level 1</b> – Tools and Tags: Pricing Gun , Garment Tagging Gun, String tags, Sticker labels, Clothes Tags, Digital tags, Printed shelf tags, Security tags, Alteration tags, Layaway tags/ On-hold tags.  <b>Level 2</b> – Information on Tags: Check that information on tags corresponds to the info. on the database, Complete the correct information manually, Check that information on tag is legible and complete, Use tools correctly and safely, Apply tags appropriately on shelves / products.  <b>Level 3</b> – Elements: Colour scheme and harmony , Effective use of space, Product visibility, Grouping, Theme clarity, Creativity or Originality		

<b>Subject Focus:</b>	Financial Aspects		
<b>LO 4.</b>	Dealing with currencies, payment equipment and payment methods		
<b>K7</b>	<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Level 3</b>
	K-7. Identify <b>FIVE</b> currencies used across the world. (1 mark)	K-7. List <b>FIVE</b> different payment equipment used by the retailer. (1 mark)	K-7. Outline <b>FOUR</b> payment equipment used by the retailer. (2 marks)
	<p><b>Level 1</b> – Currencies: Euro, American Dollar, Australian Dollar, Canadian Dollar, Yen, Sterling (GBP), Swiss Franc, Dinar</p> <p><b>Level 2 &amp; 3</b> – Different Payment equipment: POS, EPOS (includes contactless payments), Cash register, Self-checkout machines, Cash counting equipment, Counterfeit detector</p>		
<b>K8</b>	K-8. Identify <b>FOUR</b> different payment methods. (1 mark)	K-8. Outline <b>TWO</b> the benefits of offering different payment methods. (1 mark)	K-8. Outline steps to take when dealing with counterfeit money. (2 marks)
	<p><b>Level 1</b> – Payment methods: Cash, Debit card, Credit card, Contactless payment, Gift card, Cheques, Vouchers, Bank Transfer</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> – Benefits of offering various payment methods: Better customer experience, Higher sales, Faster service, More customers</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> – Steps when dealing with counterfeit money : Stay calm and be polite, Check the note carefully, Follow the store's procedure by informing superiors, Keep the note and contact police</p>		
	A-5. Counting cash at the beginning of a shift. (3 marks)	A-5. Counting cash at the end of a shift. (3 marks)	A-5. Basic reconciliation and balancing of the cash drawer. (4 marks)
<b>A5</b>	<p><b>Level 1</b> – Counting cash at the beginning of a shift :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sort coins in their respective compartments</li> <li>Count coins and notes</li> <li>Record information on Daily Cash Report</li> </ul> <p><b>Level 2</b> – Counting cash at the end of a shift :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take cash drawer in a secluded area</li> <li>Re-organise coins in their respective compartments</li> <li>Count coins and notes</li> <li>Record information on Daily Cash Report</li> </ul> <p><b>Level 3</b> – Reconciliation and balancing of the cash drawer :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reconcile with the sales report (confirming the total with the manager)</li> <li>Remove the right amount of additional takings physically to reset the cash float</li> <li>Sign the daily cash report</li> <li>Prepare the envelope with takings and the daily cash report</li> </ul> <p><b>N.B For this practical only cash (coins and notes) are to be used. Do not include vouchers, coupons, credit notes or bank chits at this stage.</b></p>		